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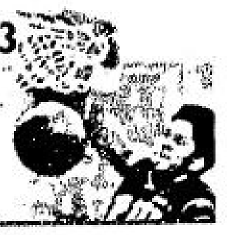

SC sacks singing judge who frequented karaoke bar

JUDGE KOTONG

By Philip C. Tubeza

HE did it his way. Now he's singing "Let me try again."

The Supreme Court has sacked a Cebu City judge for demanding

SC SACKS/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Ombudsman blames 'typist's snafu,' includes agri chief

By Armand N. Nocum

NOT SO fast.

The Office of the Ombudsman has issued a separate order, this time including Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap's name in a list of respondents charged with graft for the alleged overprice scam involving P432 million

OMBUDSMAN/ A6

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Thursday, September 23, 2004 ★★ 52 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 288 P18

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Palace probes 'fat cats'

GSIS chief fights back vs congressmen

By Gil Cabacungan Jr., A. Noel Velasco and Jhunnex Napallacan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is reviewing the performance of the Government Service and Insurance System's Winston Garcia and other "fat cats" in government-owned and -controlled corporations, Malacañang announced yesterday.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo was considering replacing Garcia, GSIS president and general manager who is under fire for allegedly mismanaging the state pension fund and enriching himself in office, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said: "The performance of all [GOCC] executives including Mr. Garcia is being reviewed."

He hinted that Ms Arroyo could announce new recruits for plum GOCC positions in the coming weeks based on her performance assessment.

Bunye was also asked whether the Palace considered Garcia a "sacred cow" because of his family's contribution to Ms Arroyo's landslide win in Cebu, which clinched her victory in the May elections.

To which Bunye replied: "That (Garcia's being a sacred cow) is just an impression."

But Garcia, whom four congressmen and GSIS employees have accused of running up to P5.25 million in unliquidated cash advances, is fighting back.

He said one of the lawmakers seeking a congressional inquiry into the alleged mismanagement and misuse of funds by GSIS officials was lobbying in behalf of reinsurance companies who wanted to corner the GSIS' multibillion-peso reinsurance business.

"I just hope it is a mere coincidence that one of the four congressmen who signed the resolution came to my office to discuss the reinsurance business of the GSIS," he said.

Garcia suggested that the criticisms against him were being funded by a "cabal" of reinsurance brokers who had been pressuring him to reverse his poli-

PALACE/ A4

WINSTON Garcia blames reinsurance companies who want to corner multibillion-peso reinsurance business. JESS YUSON

Escort girl tells Senate 2 lawmakers are clients

By Michael Lim Ubac

NO NAMES, just clues for now.

The senator is "about 50 years old, an incumbent," would rather do it out of town, and deals with pimps. The congressman snorts shabu, gets tired after one round, knows gay speak, and also deals with pimps.

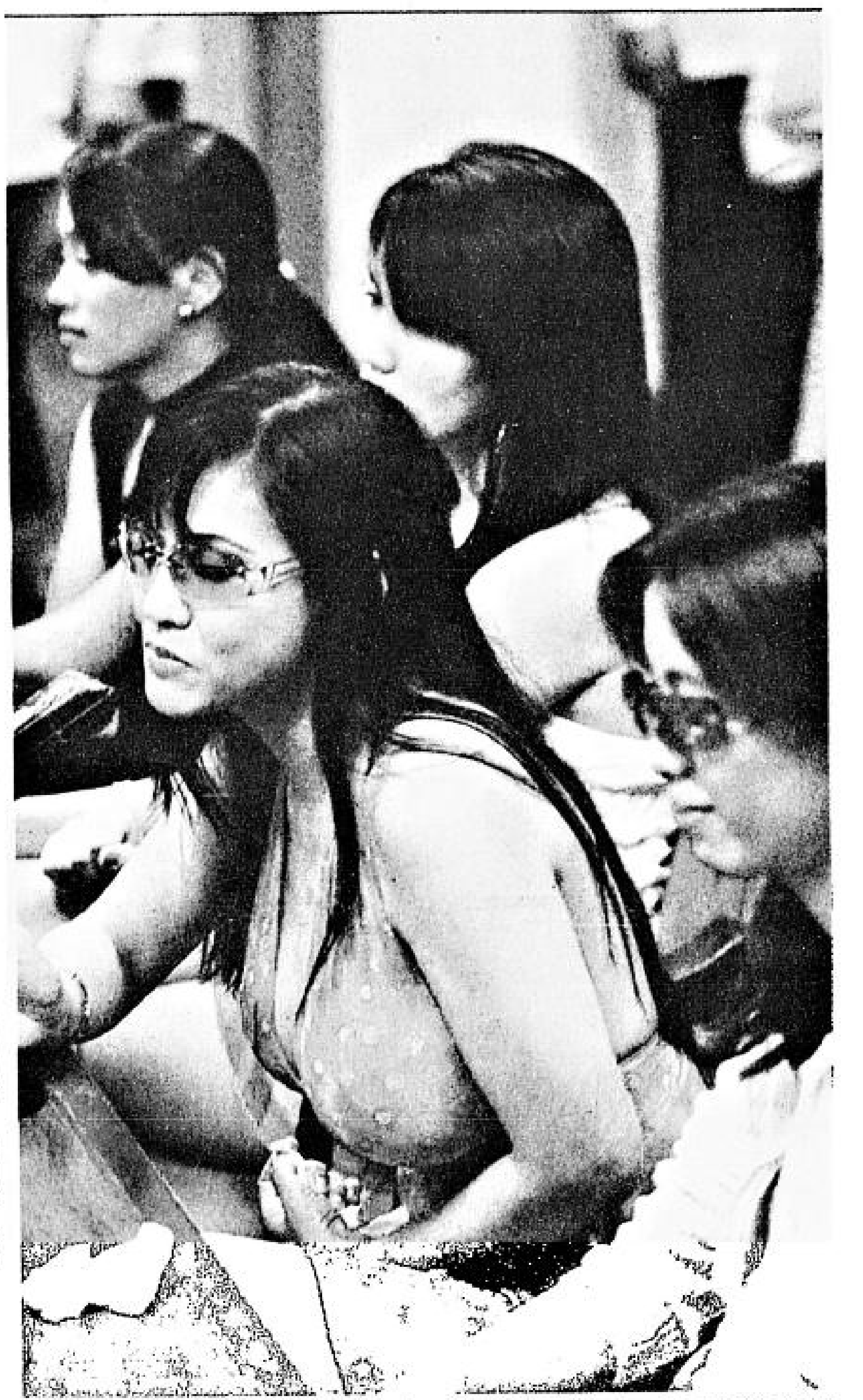
Thus an 18-year-old "escort" described two lawmakers whom she said were among the clients in her line of work.

Testifying yesterday before the Senate Committee on Labor Employment and Human Resources chaired by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, Janine Roque said she started working as an escort last year, when she was only 17.

Roque would not give names even when pressed during the hearing, prompting Estrada to require her to do so in an executive session with himself and two lady senators, his mother, Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, and Jamby Madrigal.

"Are you sure that the congressman uses drugs? You should name him," said Estrada. Roque claimed that the congressman had asked her and another fe-

ESCORT/ A6



ESCORT girls' revelations rock august chamber. Teener tells Senate her list includes other congressmen, police generals and mayors. JESS YUSON

DESPITE pleas from wife and daughter, Iraqi militants execute American hostage Jack Hensley. REUTERS

Militants behead another American hostage in Iraq

BAGHDAD—American hostage Jack Hensley was announced beheaded by Iraqi militants on Tuesday, just over a week before his 49th birthday, and apparently only 24 hours after compatriot Eugene Armstrong was similarly slaughtered—head sawn off by a black-clad, hooded man using a long knife.

The executioners announced Hensley's fate in an Internet statement, in which they again vowed to kill one remaining captive, a Briton, unless all Iraqi

MILITANTS/ A4

Napocor key to solution of fiscal crisis—UP prof

By D.J. Yap, *PDI Research* and Michael Lim Ubac

SOLVING National Power Corp.'s woes will ease by a third the government's fiscal problems, according to a professor at the University of the Philippines School Economics (UPSE).

The hard part is convincing consumers that higher electric bills are part of the solution, said Felipe Medalla at a dinner with INQUIRER editors on Tuesday.

Napocor, the state-run power-generating firm, is scrambling to stem huge losses projected at P114 billion this year after posting a total of P180 billion in losses over the past six years.

Its P1.3-trillion debt as of 2003 accounted for 42 percent of the national government debt.

One way to finance Napocor's losses is to allow the firm to raise its tariff on distribution utilities, such as the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), that buy their power from Napocor, said Medalla, one of the 11 UPSE professors who warned of an economic collapse in two to three years unless the government reined in the public sector deficit and debt.

This means consumers will have to shoulder the burden through rate increases once the distribution utilities pass on the higher costs to their costumers, Medalla said.

Napocor received early this month the go-signal from the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to increase its rates

NAPOCOR/ A10

Child sex now prevalent in RP, cop tells senators

By Michael Lim Ubac

PEDOPHILIA, or the sexual desire of an adult for a child, is now prevalent among Filipinos, according to the deputy chief of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

Testifying at a hearing called yesterday by the Senate committee on youth, women and family relations on the effect of the proliferation of pedophile materials on the increased sexual exploitation of minors, Sr. Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza said pornography involving Filipino children was now readily available in the local market.

Mendoza said the problem was bigger than what law enforcers had thought. He said that in combating child pornography and interlocking crimes such as child prostitution and rape, the government needed to study the organized crime behind pedophilia.

He defined organized crime as perpetrated by at least three people with the

CHILD/ A6

Nuclear plant, IPPs, GMA behind Napocor mess

By Ronnel W. Domingo

STATE-OWNED National Power Corp. has been described as debt-ridden for so long that the term now needs to be defined in terms of numbers for us to realize the gravity of the situation.

Napocor management has not released data on its financial performance in 2003, although officials would only say that the firm incurred a net loss of P113 billion that year.

Its liabilities, which stood at P1.4 trillion as of end-2003, is still growing.

Two weeks ago, the national government completed raising $1.5 billion from the international debt market to cover Napocor's operational expenses and funding needs for this year.

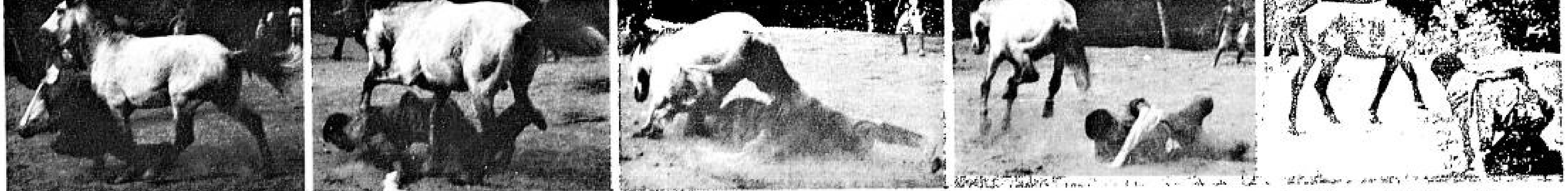
This has been the case for several years now. But back in the mid-1990s, Napocor was issuing bonds as if it was a badge of its financial viability.

In 1996, then Napocor vice president for finance Merlita M. Pajarillo wrote that the firm's leverage of 22 percent capital to 78 percent liabilities was "a strong indication of creditors' trust in Napocor's performance."

Napocor's financial woes are usually attributed to the graft-ridden Bataan

NUCLEAR PLANT/ A10

HORSE FIGHT



When animals attack, they cease being material for amusement. In Barangay San Antonio, Roseller T. Lim, Zamboanga Sibugay, a bettor is run aground by a horse fleeing a battle with its own kind. Horse fight betting is a popular pastime among residents, especially among those who make a profit in trading rubber sap, their main livelihood. EDWIN BACASMAS

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/09/23/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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MILF hosting JI, says gov't report

SEPARATIST guerrillas in Mindanao have hosted terror training camps for militant groups from Indonesia and Malaysia for at least seven years, according to a secret government report.

The training continued until at least early this year, with 19 new members of the Jemaah Islamiyah—the al-Qaida-linked Southeast Asian terror group—finishing in January, said a copy of the Philippine National Police assessment report.

United States and Australian officials have expressed deep concerns over persistent reports of such camps in Mindanao, saying Jemaah Islamiyah could pass deadly skills to a new generation of militants capable of striking anywhere.

A number of suspected JI militants arrested in Southeast Asia have said they trained in the southern Philippines.

The covert training was reportedly hosted mostly by the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front which has rural strongholds across the impoverished south.

The MILF has repeatedly denied any links with Jemaah Islamiyah or other foreign terror groups, and—in an apparent effort to bolster its on-and-off peace talks with the government—has pledged to help track down terrorists.

Terror training

The report said Jemaah Islamiyah's founder, the late Abdullah Sungkar, and MILF chairman Salamat Hashim, who died last year, agreed in 1995 to set up a training base inside the MILF's sprawling Camp Abubakar stronghold in Maguindanao province.

Terror training started in 1997 to 1998, the report said.

The Jemaah Islamiyah training base was set up near three other camps used separately to train new militants from neighboring Indonesia, it said.

After Camp Abubakar fell during a July 2000 military offensive, Jemaah Islamiyah instructors and trainees fled and set up a new camp, Muaskar Jabal Quba, on densely forested Mt. Kararao on the boundary of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur provinces, the report said.

It did not say how many Jemaah Islamiyah recruits have been trained in Mindanao, but said one "cadetship training" program produced three batches of graduates totaling 51 people, with the latest class of 19 finishing in January.

They included an Indonesian identified as Zulkifli, who later rose to head the group's Philippine cell.

The MILF has let other militant groups from Indonesia and Malaysia—including Laskar Jundulah, Darul Islam and Kumpulan Militan Malaysia "and probably other Islamic terrorist organizations with separatist agenda in the rest of Southeast Asia"—train in their strongholds in the past, the report said.

It also said al-Qaida members have been at MILF camps, but didn't say when.

"Al-Qaida operatives have not only frequented its camps but in many occasions have stayed to conduct training on various terrorist skills for MILF fighters," it said.

The military has acknowledged that up to two dozen Jemaah Islamiyah members may still be in the south, but claims they're on the run and no longer training.

But other military officers said on condition of anonymity that training continues.

Authorities are still checking the whereabouts of the recently graduated JI recruits, whether they are still in the country waiting for assignments from their JI superiors or have already taken part in terrorist operations abroad, said Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, the PNP spokesperson.

The PNP report said the 51 graduates belonged to three batches of Kuliyah Harbiyah Dauroh I, the cadetship training course for JI recruits.

The first two classes had 17 and 15 graduates, respectively, while the last one graduated 19 recruits last January, it said.

According to the police intelligence report, the country's south is included in the Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara, a pan-Islamic state that the Jemaah Islamiya has been planning to establish in Southeast Asia.

Spotted in MILF turf

According to the PNP report, foreigners were spotted in MILF-controlled territories in Mindanao during the late 1990s.

"Sometime in 1995, JI founder Abdullah Sungkar went to Hashim Salamat, the late MILF chairman and set up a training base at Camp Hudeibia located inside Camp Abubakar complex of the MILF in Sitio Tugaig, Barangay Bumbaran, Barira Maguindanao in Central Mindanao," the report said.

Smaller camps were subsequently put up at Hudeibia.

The training activities began sometime between 1997 and 1998 in an "exclusive enclave inside the vast complex of Camp Abubakar." *AP with Christian V. Esguerra*

Suddenly shy, Palace mum on LRTA appointment

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PERHAPS Malacañang has gone shy about announcing the appointments of its political allies or the official paperwork has yet to reach the President's spokesperson.

Why else couldn't Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirm the appointment of El Shaddai spokesperson Mel Robles as administrator of the Light Rail Transit Authority?

"We will confirm when we see an actual appointment," Bunye announced yesterday in a press briefing.

When told that Robles himself had confirmed his appointment, Bunye said: "That's what he says. We haven't seen anything yet."

But Robles, long-time spokesperson of El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, had already reported for work, reporters informed the presidential spokesperson.

"Anybody can go to the LRTA. Let's just wait for the actual appointment if there was such an appointment," Bunye said.

He gave the same answer when asked to confirm the appointment of former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr. as chair of the Public Estates Authority. Revilla had taken his oath in Malacañang minutes after Bunye said he would double-check the appointment.

Unlike in the Cabinet revamp, when Bunye released names of new appointees to the media, Ms Arroyo's succeeding appointments of political supporters were not actually announced.

In Revilla's case, Palace reporters confirmed his appointment to the PEA on Monday when he took his oath in Malacañang. It turned out he was appointed on Aug. 26.

Robles was appointed as early as Aug. 17.

Neither could Bunye confirm reports that actresses Nora Aunor and Elizabeth Oropesa were appointed or about to be appointed chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board and director of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., respectively.

He brushed off criticisms that most of Ms Arroyo's appointments were payback for political support in the May election.

"We have explained the minimum requirements. One, they need to have her (President's) trust and confidence and two, they must have the perceived ability to implement her programs. Those requirements have been met," Bunye said.

Cigarette smuggling costs gov't ₱2B a year

By Carlito Pablo

THE GOVERNMENT is losing at least P2 billion in taxes every year from the large volume of cigarette importations at the Subic Bay Freeport and the Clark Special Economic Zone, according to Albay Rep. Joey Salceda.

Salceda (Lakas-Kampi) made this revelation as the House ways and means committee, which is holding deliberations on the proposed bill to index the tax rate on alcohol and tobacco, was swamped by opposing proposals on how taxes on domestically manufactured cigarettes can be raised.

"In excise tax alone, the government is losing P2.2 billion because of the huge volume of imported, high-end cigarettes that come in through Subic and Clark where these products are tax-free," Salceda said during a committee hearing.

Salceda told the committee that the value of imported, tax-free cigarettes that entered Subic and Clark in 2003 was P4.4 billion.

"If we add the foregone taxes like value-added tax, income tax and tax on raw materials, the amount of lost revenues would reach P2.7 billion," Salceda said.

Abuses

Salceda and Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. (LDP, Makati) both proposed that cigarettes be removed from the list of tax-free products allowed to come in through the two economic zones.

"We have to address seriously the abuses of tax-free privileges in free ports and special economic zones," Locsin said.

In a press statement released hours after the committee hearing, Salceda corrected the figures he released earlier. He said the value of imported cigarettes that entered Subic and Clark from 2001 to 2003 was P4.6 billion a year and the estimated loss in taxes to the government amounted to P2.9 billion.

"If we include liquor, then the total loss to the government is around P10.2 billion during the three-year period under scrutiny," Salceda said in his statement.

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac), the chair of the ways and means committee, said that if one were to include the other abuses of tax perks in Subic and Clark, the revenue losses would reach P7.4 billion a year.

Lapus said that these included losses from smuggling and counterfeiting.

The committee is hearing proposals on how to increase government receipts from the tax on cigarettes, currently valued at about P20 to 21 billion a year.

The two leading domestic cigarette-manufacturing companies—Fortune Tobacco Corp. and Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing—have differing views on cigarette taxation.

Fortune Tobacco, owned by ethnic Chinese business tycoon Lucio Tan, supports a return to the ad valorem tax system from the current specific tax without any need to index tax rates to inflation.

The finance department is proposing the indexation of the excise tax on sin products to inflation, which is seen as one of the quickest way to raise revenues as the country deals with a threatened fiscal crisis.

But legislators, finance officials and cigarette and beverage manufacturers are locked in a debate on the virtues of the two forms of excise taxation—ad valorem or specific. **(See related story.)**

In a statement at yesterday's hearing, Fortune president Antonio Abaya claimed that the ad valorem tax was the most equitable way of raising revenues because "it has a built-in mechanism for capturing additional taxes whenever prices of excisable products go up."

Abaya said that had the finance department and Congress not adopted the specific tax system in 1997, government could have earned an additional P3.5 billion in cigarette taxes from the top five brands alone that were produced in 2003.

'Progressive tax'

He said that what the government wants to do now is to impose higher taxes that "hurt the poor more than the rich."

"Ad valorem is a progressive tax because high-priced products pay higher taxes while low-priced brands pay their proportionate share," Abaya claimed.

Philip Morris said it supported the views of some legislators about the weakness of the current four-tier price classification of cigarette brands.

Under the current specific system, the lower the price per pack of a cigarette brand, the lower the tax paid by the manufacturer.

What is tax indexation?

THE NEED for indexation of the excise taxes on the so-called sin products—alcoholic beverages and tobacco —arose when taxes on these products were converted from ad valorem to specific taxes in the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program passed by Congress in 1997.

The main reason for the shift to specific taxation was that tens of billions of pesos in taxes were allegedly evaded by a certain cigarette company through the ad valorem system by under-declaring the value of its product.

Ad valorem taxes are computed as a percentage of the value or price of the product, like the 10 percent value-added tax or a five percent import tariff.

A specific tax assigns a fixed amount per unit of the taxed product, for instance, P5 per liter of gasoline or P20 per kilogram of copra.

The advantage of the ad valorem taxes is that they go up automatically when prices go up, thus tax revenues remain steady even with inflation. Its disadvantage, however, is that manufacturers or traders can cheat by declaring the value of the taxed commodity to be lower than it actually is.

This form of cheating is prevented by the specific tax which imposes duty on the quantity of the taxed product sold by the company, whatever its price.

The problem is that the specific tax stays the same even as the price of the product keeps rising with inflation, thereby eroding the government's tax take.

To correct this, the tax can be indexed to inflation, that is made to adjust periodically and automatically based on actual inflation.

The Department of Finance had proposed indexation in 1997 when the shift to specific taxation was legislated. But members of Congress at the time struck out the indexation provision in the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program.

Cops who can't shoot straight to lose guns

By Christian V. Esguerra

IF YOU want to keep your gun, better start shooting straight.

Metro Manila's 15,000 policemen got this warning yesterday as part of the Philippine National Police's latest effort to rid its ranks of that one embarrassment—cops who don't know how to shoot.

Judgment day will start on Saturday when the National Capital Region Police Office hosts a two-day firearms proficiency and classification match at its firing range at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig.

The competition will classify policemen based on their degree of proficiency. Marksmen are automatically disqualified.

Policemen who will fail to get past the preliminary round will be stripped of their firearms, said Director Avelino Razon Jr., NCRPO chief.

"These guns will be given to policemen who were not issued firearms by the government but who can shoot well," he said.

A total of 47 teams representing the five police districts in Metro Manila will participate. Each team will be composed of five members led by their respective commanders. There will also be two guest teams from the media.

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Oakwood mutineer escapes from Fort Bonifacio; guards probed

By Alcuin Papa

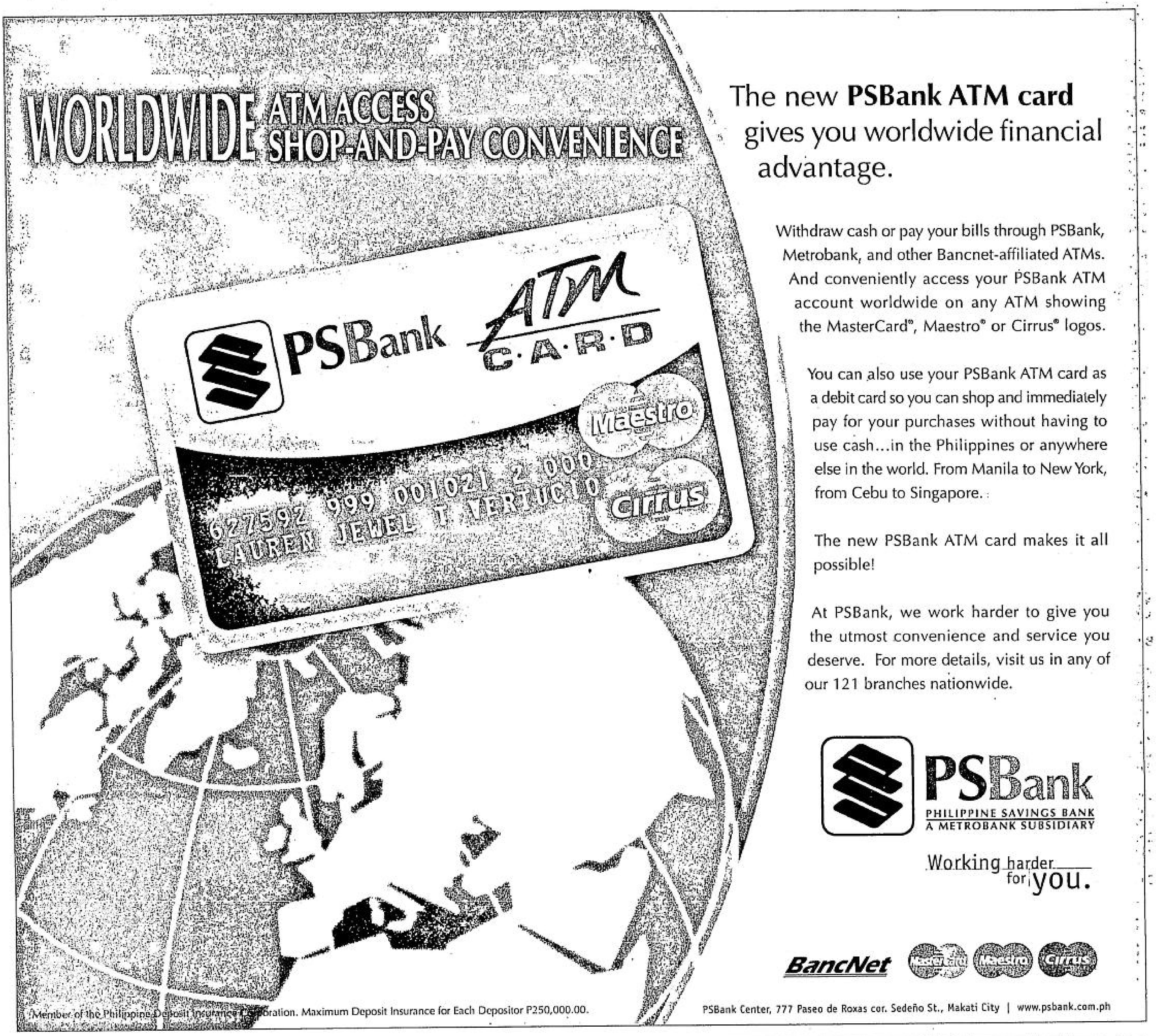
A MARINE officer in detention for participating in the Oakwood mutiny last year escaped last Tuesday afternoon from his guards inside a military camp in Makati City.

Navy spokesperson Capt. Geronimo Malabanan identified the escapee as 2Lt. Junniebert Tubo. He was one of seven Marines detained inside the minimum security area inside the Marines' headquarters inside Fort Bonifacio.

"He was being transferred because he was caught drinking. Unfortunately, his escorts failed to secure him properly," Malabanan said.

He also said that at the time of the transfer of Tubo, it was raining hatd. Malabanan theorized that Tubo might have taken advantage of the weather to escape.

Malabanan added that newly-designated Philippine Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Orlando Buenaventura has already called for a thorough investigation of the incident.



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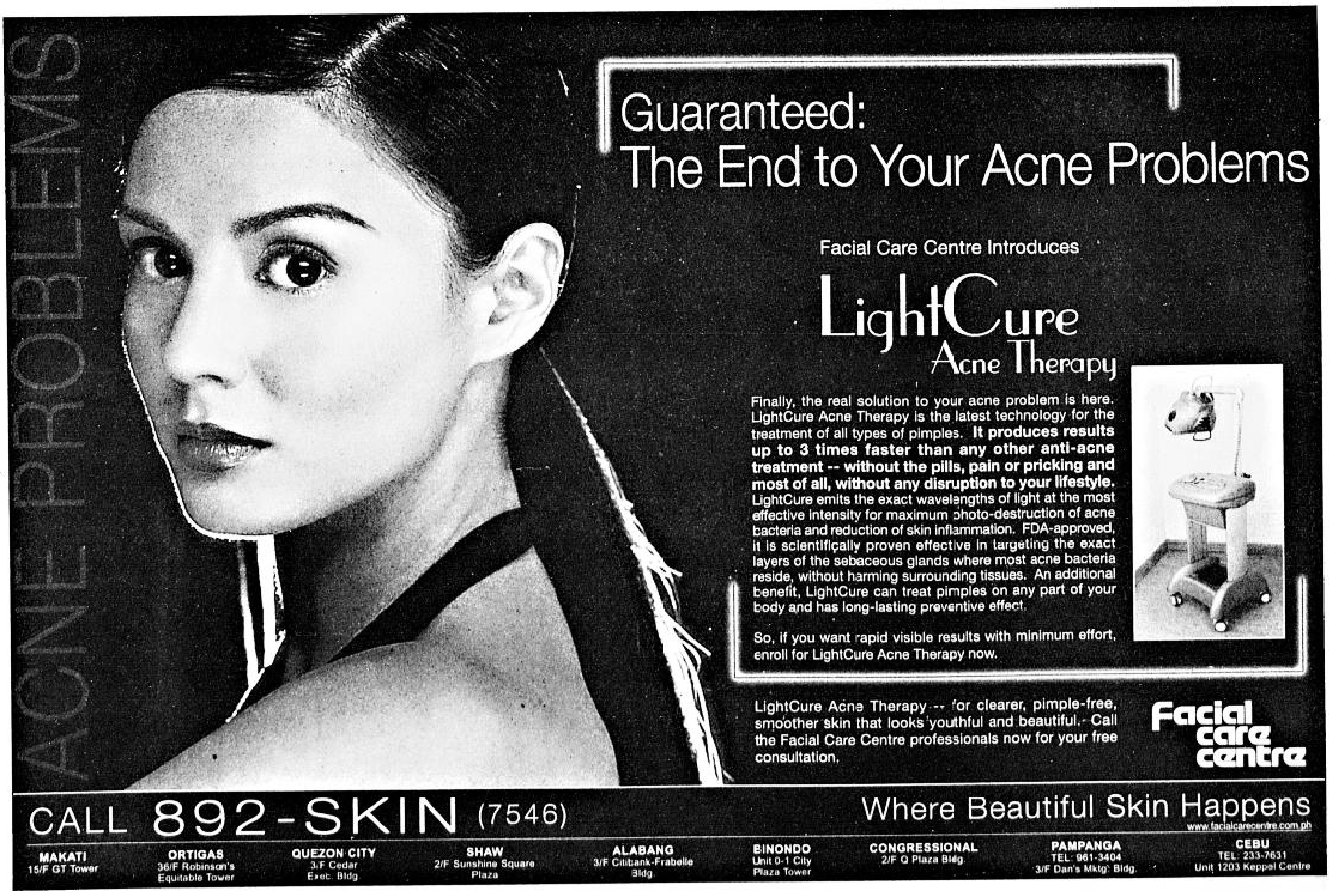

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Australia confident RP will allow Australian police

CANBERRA—Prime Minister John Howard said Wednesday he was confident that Malaysia and the Philippines will allow Australian police to operate in their territory as part of efforts to combat terrorism.

Earlier this week, Howard said if he wins elections on Oct. 9, his government will create six police teams devoted to fighting terrorism, sending some of them to Asian countries.

However, Malaysia and the Philippines warned such squads would not be welcome in their countries and again denounced Howard's policy of launching preemptive strikes in other nations to prevent terror attacks.

Howard said Wednesday he would send Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Justice Minister Chris Ellison to a number of Asian countries to seek support for his plan.

He told Australian Broadcasting Corp. television that given the history of Australian cooperation with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, "I believe this proposal will be well received."

Asked about Malaysia's and the Philippines' stated refusal to play host to Australian police, Howard predicted the proposal will be supported by their police forces.

"We have to recognize it's one of those things that will be discussed at an agency level," Howard said. "And I am optimistic on the basis of past experience and the knowledge of the working relationship between the agencies that when the implications of it are understood, there will be a very positive view." *AP*

GMA defends RP record in fighting terrorism

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo on Wednesday defended the Philippines' record in fighting terrorism following warnings from Australia and Britain of terror threats.

"We are steadily closing in on the terrorist threat and perhaps our allies should update their reports as we step up transnational cooperation through intelligence and information sharing," presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

He did not specify the countries engaged in unfair "labelling" but the statement came just after the Australian prime minister warned of threats in the region and after Britain updated its travel advisory, saying there was a "high threat of terrorism" in the Philippines.

The advisory issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office cited bombings in recent years as well as the threat posed by communist insurgents and Islamic militants like the Muslim separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping group.

The Philippine government is engaged in peace talks with the MILF and, with US training, has captured or killed many leaders of the Abu Sayyaf, a group linked by both Washington and Manila to the al-Qaida terror network.

But the government has suffered reverses such as the escape of Jemaah Islamiyah Indonesian bomb-maker Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi from a Manila police jail in July 2003. The fugitive was killed in a gunfight in Mindanao in October.

Meanwhile, the military announced it captured another member of the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo on Tuesday.

The man, Kiri Kirab, had a P150,000 bounty on his head, the military said. *AFP*

Palace probes fat cats

From page A1

SUPLICO: Author of House Resolution No. 726 seeking to investigate the alleged P5.25 million in unliquidated cash advances incurred by Garcia.

cies, particularly in the awarding of contracts for the insurance cover of the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico announced on Tuesday that he had filed Resolution No. 726 calling for the congressional inquiry. The resolution was co-sponsored by Representatives Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur, Eduardo Veloso of Leyte and Marcelino Libanan of Eastern Samar.

$50-M loan

Bunye told reporters that the President had also ordered a review of Garcia's proposal to grant a $50-million loan to the Department of Foreign Affairs for the purchase of embassy buildings and housing facilities for ambassadors.

"This is something that will have to be reviewed," he said, adding that the GSIS was under the Department of Finance, which "definitely has a say" on its operations.

Bunye said Garcia was correct in stating that his annual salary of P359,000 did not come from the national government's budget but from a separate fund.

"But this is why we have to review the salary scale of GOCCs," he said.

The review is expected to open more GOCC positions for the President to fill up.

Bunye said Ms Arroyo had ordered the review to also determine whether certain GOCCs could still be saved and be made profitable through re-engineering.

"But if there is really no solution, then they should either be privatized or collapsed. It's not fair that the public will shoulder their inefficiency," he said.

Demolition job

Garcia told the INQUIRER in Cebu City that the criticisms being aired against him were "just a demolition job" and that the people behind the supposed campaign "might have a hidden agenda."

He denied that he had unliquidated cash advances, saying that the Commission on Audit certified on Tuesday that he did not have any such advances as of August.

He said the accusation was an old issue and expressed surprise that some people were singling him out when it was supposedly common knowledge that many GOCC heads had unliquidated cash advances.

"Why single me out? This might be because some of these congressmen are involved in the reinsurance business," he said.

Garcia said that before he took over the GSIS, it used to reinsure the Napocor premiums up to 90 percent. Last year, about 70 percent was retained by the state-run pension fund.

"Because of my policy of insuring more and reinsuring less, I was able to bring down the insurance cover of Napocor from $25.2 million to just $14 million, or savings for the Napocor of more than half a billion pesos," he said.

Garcia said he angered many people when he made this policy.

He suggested that those who had exposed his alleged unliquidated cash advances used a big amount of money to gain the support of the media.

IN THE KNOW

- REINSURANCE enables the sharing of risk by insurance companies.
- Through this, a part or all of the insurer's risk is assumed by other companies in return for part of the premium paid by the insured.
- The insured, thus, gets coverage that would otherwise be too great for just one company to assume.
- By law, Napocor and all other government agencies must insure their fixes assets with the GSIS.
- For the year 2003-04, Napocor's insurance all-risk policy amounted to $14.7 million, inclusive of taxes and commissions.
- GSIS retains 70 percent of the risks and reinsures the remaining 30 percent.

Attempted bribery

Garcia told the INQUIRER that a few months ago, one of the four congressmen who signed the resolution came to his office to discuss the GSIS reinsurance business. The lawmaker was accompanied by five reinsurance brokers, he said.

During the meeting that took place at the GSIS conference room, he said, he explained GSIS policies on reinsurance to his visitors.

He recalled that the congressman was particularly interested in the reinsurance of Philippine airports at the time.

He alleged that the congressman offered him a bribe provided the GSIS retained only 10 percent of Napocor's insurance cover and reinsured 90 percent. He turned down the offer, he said.

The GSIS is mandated by law to provide insurance coverage to all government properties. Napocor is one of the biggest property holders in the government, with a single power plant costing up to $750 million.

Garcia said the insurance premiums of Napocor amounted to $14 million in 2003. Of this, 70 percent is retained by the GSIS, and 30 percent, by reinsurance companies.

GSIS senior vice president Joji Valera told the INQUIRER that as of July, the total premiums received by the state agency had reached P2.8 billion, of which P1.5 billion was reinsured.

Those insured are covered by an industrial all-risk policy.

Challenge

Nevertheless, Garcia said he was ready to face the congressional inquiry.

But he challenged Suplico to include other agency heads in the inquiry to dispel any suspicion that the latter had a hidden agenda.

Garcia also defended his sister and executive assistant, Carolyn Garcia Empemano, from the accusation that she was the second most powerful official at the GSIS.

He said the employment of his sister was not illegal because he was allowed to employ someone close to him in a confidential position.

He added that his sister's post was coterminous with his, and denied that she had also incurred unliquidated cash advances.

Mum Palace

The Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) said it was not surprised by the allegations on Garcia's alleged fund abuse but was appalled by Malacañang's continued silence on the issue.

Courage president Ferdinand Gaite noted that Ms Arroyo had remained mum on Garcia's alleged "profligacy" in office even after calling for sacrifice from the public and austerity from civil servants.

"News about Garcia's wanton use of our funds is no longer a surprise to us, but Malacañang's silence in this obvious display of profligacy amidst its tough talk of sacrifice and belt-tightening is appalling," Gaite said in a statement.

He said government workers had repeatedly called for an investigation into Garcia's allegedly excessive salary and benefits as well as his reported abuse of the GSIS pension fund, but "these have fallen on deaf ears." *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

Militants behead another American hostage in Iraq

From page A1

women in US and British prisons were released. The renewed threat came as a senior Iraqi justice official said the case of at least one of two Iraqi women in US detention was being reviewed, and that she may soon be released.

Posted Tuesday night under the pseudonym Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, the claim could not be verified. His past postings have proved correct, but a video of the killing by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's tawhid (monotheism) jihad (holy war) group, pledged to be released "soon," had not materialized yesterday.

"The nation's zealous sons slaughtered the second American hostage ... after the end of the deadline [for the hostage takers' demand]. We will provide you with film of the slaughter soon, God willing," said the statement.

Al-Zarqawi is Washington's number one enemy in Iraq. The US Central Intelligence Agency believes "with a high degree of confidence" that he wielded the blade himself in Armstrong's decapitation.

Armstrong, Hensley and Briton Kenneth Bigley—construction contractors for General Supplies and Commercial Services, based in the United Arab Emirates—were kidnapped from their house in central Baghdad last week.

Body found

Following the announcement of Hensley's killing, a US official said a body had been found, but had not yet been identified. Iraqi officials said a decapitated body was found in a black bag, in a western district of Baghdad. The head was reportedly found with the body, but there was no immediate indication that it was Hensley.

"Obviously there needs to be a process of identification and the family needs to be contacted," the US official said.

On Monday, Armstrong's body was found near a Baghdad mosque hours before news of his beheading became public.

Hensley, from the state of Georgia, is married and has a 13-year-old daughter. His wife appealed on US television on Tuesday pleading that her husband be spared.

"My daughter would like her father back and I'm willing to do whatever it will take to get him here," Patricia Hensley said on the ABC network's "Good Morning America" program.

Dr. Germ out soon

US forces insist they hold only two female Iraqi prisoners.

The women, dubbed "Dr Germ" and "Mrs Anthrax," are held in a prison for high-level suspects.

Hours after the claim of the second beheading—the Iraqi Justice Ministry said the government and the US forces had decided to free Dr. Germ or Rihab Rashid Taha, a scientist so dubbed for her work on biological weapons. She was to be conditionally released on bail. Ministry spokesperson Noori Abdul-Rahim Ibrahim denied the decision was linked to the kidnappers' demands.

Britain's Guardian newspaper quoted the justice minister as saying the case of Mrs. Anthrax, or Huda Ammash, another scientist, was also being reviewed. The minister also said the review had nothing to do with the hostage situation.

Ammash was on the US military's list of the 55 most-wanted members of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Sheik Abdul-Sattar Abdul-Jabbar, a member of the Association of Muslim Scholars—conservative Iraqi clerics who oppose the US presence in Iraq but have interceded in the past to win the release of foreign hostages—has questioned the claim of only two female prisoners in US and British custody.

Abdul-Jabbar told al-Jazeera pan-Arab satellite television that there were "tens, perhaps hundreds of Iraqi women prisoners in the occupation's jail that were supposed to be released before this tragedy."

No negotiations

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, US President George W. Bush and Iraq's interim prime minister, Iyad Allawi, have repeatedly said they will not negotiate with hostage-takers.

Even so, the British government made repeated appeals in the past week for the three hostages' release. On Tuesday, a Foreign Office spokesman addressed Arabic satellite channels across the region.

At the United Nations on Tuesday, Bush vowed not to retreat against an insurgency he said was likely to turn even more violent.

Before the report of Hensley's death, the family of British hostage Bigley, 62, urged Blair to have the two women prisoners freed. "Only you can save him now," Bigley's son Craig said in an appeal.

The family welcomed the release of Taha. Referring to the kidnappers, Bigley's brother Paul told British Broadcasting Corp. radio: "Hopefully they will pick this up on the media, and show that they have a gram of decency in them by releasing Ken."

Earlier, on Tuesday night, he was desperate. "I truly believe I've lost Ken," he told Channel 4 Television News. "He's not quite dead yet but I think they'll kill him." he said. *Reuters, AP*

SC sacks singing judge who frequented karaoke bar

From page A1

P250,000 and free visits to a karaoke bar from litigants in exchange for a favorable ruling.

In a 34-page resolution, the high court sacked Judge Agapito L. Hontanosas Jr. of Branch 16 Cebu Regional Trial Court for gross misconduct, gross ignorance of the law, and simple misconduct.

It also ordered him to explain in 10 days why he should not be disbarred for his serious offenses. The tribunal noted that Hontanosas had previously been sanctioned for frequenting casinos.

"Judges (should) be the embodiment of competence, integrity and independence, and behave at all times to promote public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary," the court said.

It forfeited all of his benefits, except his accrued leave credits, and disqualified him from public service.

The tribunal sacked Hontanosas based on the complaint of brothers Richard and Rafael King, owners of J. King and Sons Co. Inc. and who had a pending petition before the judge for "specific performance with damages with prayer for writ of preliminary attachment."

Hontanosas had granted the writ of attachment but on July 5, 2002, he withdrew it without conducting a hearing. That same day, he summoned the brothers to his house, and demanded P250,000 in exchange for "reconsidering the hearing."

"Due to the fact that Rafael and (Hontanosas) were friends, (the judge) frankly told Rafael that he needed money and if Rafael could match the offer of the opposing party and come up with P250,000, (Hontanosas) would reverse his order lifting the attachment upon (the brothers') filing of a motion of reconsideration," the tribunal said.

The businessmen were not able to give in to the judge's demand because they were short of cash. When they filed their motion for reconsideration, Hontanosas junked it. He later inhibited himself from the case.

"Their conversation lasted no more than 20 minutes and because Richard and Rafael were shocked by (Hontanosas') actuation, they immediately left (his) house," the court said.

"By entertaining a litigant in his home and receiving benefits given by said litigant, (Hontanosas) miserably failed to live up to the standards of judicial conduct," it added.

The tribunal said it found that the allegation of extortion against Hontanosas was "sufficiently substantiated" by the testimonies of the King brothers, which it found credible.

"Human experience tells us that extortion would be done in utmost secrecy, minimizing possible witnesses ... to require that there be any documentary evidence or a paper trail of the commission of extortion would be quite absurd for naturally, respondent would not allow such incriminating evidence to exist," it said.

The court also noted that the King brothers had three pending cases before Hontanosas but this did not stop the judge from frequenting their karaoke music lounge at the Metropolis Hotel.

Two waiters Antonio Cabigon and Axel Reyes, testified that the judge and his wife, sometimes accompanied by friends, frequented the bar. Management told the waiters that the judge and his wife did not have to pay their bills.

However, for records purposes, Cabigon and Reyes would give the bill or order slips to Hontanosas for his signature, but it was the judge's wife who signed for them.

"(Hontanosas) should have insisted on paying, especially considering that the complainant has a total of three cases pending before his court. Nothing on record shows that (he) even exerted any effort to so insist. He appeared only too ready and willing to enjoy the facilities of complainant's karaoke for free," the tribunal said.

Hontanosas was also guilty of gross ignorance of the law for not holding a full-blown hearing on the motion to lift attachment and for violating the three-day notice rule. The motion was mailed to the Kings on July 3, 2002 but the judge approved it two days later without holding a full-blown hearing.

"(He) acted with indecent haste in immediately holding a hearing on the motion ... filed only a few minutes before said hearing, in considering the same submitted for resolution, and in issuing the order lifting the writ for preliminary attachment and approving the counter-bond, all on the sale day of July 5, 2002, without giving (the Kings) the opportunity to be heard on the matter," the court said.

It added that Hontanosas acted "negligently" when he approved the counter-bond for the lifting of the writ, considering that the bonding company did not have enough properties to answer for the counter-bond it issued in the amount of P35.9 million.

The tribunal said the bonding company's authorized maximum net retention was only P13.4 million.

Erap told: What good is a Cabinet if president is bad?

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER President Joseph Estrada had no right to criticize President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointment of former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr. as head of the Public Estates Authority (PEA) because he himself was not a good president.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles (Lakas, first dist., Davao City) made this bold comment yesterday after Estrada mocked Ms Arroyo for putting Revilla in charge of an agency mired in scandal.

He said Estrada's comment that his Cabinet appointees when he was president were better than Ms Arroyo's choices was unfair and uncalled for.

"Conceding, but not agreeing that his appointees were good, Erap did not live up to their expectations so they abandoned him in office. What's the use of a good Cabinet when you have a bad president?" Nograles said.

"What's good about an official Cabinet when the president does not listen to them and instead, forms his own midnight, gambling, drinking, non-official Cabinet?" he added.

Nograles said Ms Arroyo should be given a free hand in choosing her Cabinet officials because more than anyone else, she knows what is best for her administration.

"She will govern much better than Estrada because of her work habits, focus, grasp and perspectives," he said.

On the other hand, Rep. Rozanno Rufino Biazon (Liberal Party, lone district, Muntinlupa) would have preferred a new face.

"Preferably someone young," he said, "This would have been a breath of fresh air and would reflect a proactive leadership. Sadly, the message delivered by the appointment is that we have a dearth of qualified and willing executives."

House Deputy Minority Leader Rolex Suplico (LDP, fifth dist., Iloilo) said it was unfortunate that the President could not find more qualified people for government positions.

"The appointment of Revilla as PEA chair shows that not only can the administration resurrect a dead career, it can also resurrect an abolished agency," Suplico said.

The appointment could also be a reward for the 77-year-old Revilla who chaired the Senate Public works committee throughout his two terms.

Tax amnesty to encourage cheats, says Escudero

By Cynthia D. Balana, Carlito Pablo and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

HOUSE Minority Leader Francis Escudero is calling for an outright rejection of the proposed tax amnesty law, which is now in the final stages of deliberations in the chamber, saying it would only encourage tax cheats and embolden tax evaders.

Escudero said it would be a disgrace to the 13th Congress if the measure is passed on top of the eight new tax measures that President Macapagal-Arroyo wants legislated to avert a fiscal crisis.

"It's a shame that this government commits to raise revenue by plugging tax leakages, estimated to be P200 billion every year, when the first bill it proposed on tax is to get criminals and cheats off the hook," he said.

The President last Monday signed as urgent House Bill No. 2933 which will grant a one-time tax amnesty on all unpaid taxes up to 2003.

Escudero said he was disgusted that the finance and internal revenue officials were supporting the measure which he said would compromise the government's resolve to curb the deficit.

Escudero also rejected the provision in the tax amnesty bill stating that a taxpayer can only be charged with perjury if he understates his net worth by over 30 percent.

"They are just giving a different definition of lying. Are they saying that it's acceptable that one cheats as long as it is below 30 percent?" he said.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño said the tax amnesty was an admission of the government's failure to go after errant taxpayers and a way of rewarding tax cheats by allowing them to settle their tax obligations at a giveaway rate of 3 percent of declared net worth.

He said the measure was "an insult to millions of wage and salary workers who have been religiously paying their obligations in the form of withholding taxes that are regularly deducted from their pay slips. It is they who should get a reprieve and rewarded, not the tax cheats."

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, who sponsored the bill on the floor on Tuesday night, defended the measure against against the criticisms.

'Exceptional tool'

"Given the proper structure and timing, a tax amnesty can be an exceptional tool in revenue enhancement," he said.

Lapus said that aside from the immediate collection of revenues, another short-term benefit is the broadening of the tax base that will ensure "sustained improvement in collection revenue in the long term."

He said the tax amnesty would be the last chance for tax delinquents to come clean as it offers a "one-time amnesty on all national internal revenue tax liabilities for the taxable year 2003 and prior years."

He said HB 2933 will be "the ultimate tax amnesty," there would no forthcoming round of amnesties and tax enforcers henceforth would vigorously apply the full force of the law.

"We have declared a moratorium on the grant of tax amnesty, whether legislated or administratively undertaken by the Bureau of Internal Revenue," Lapus said.

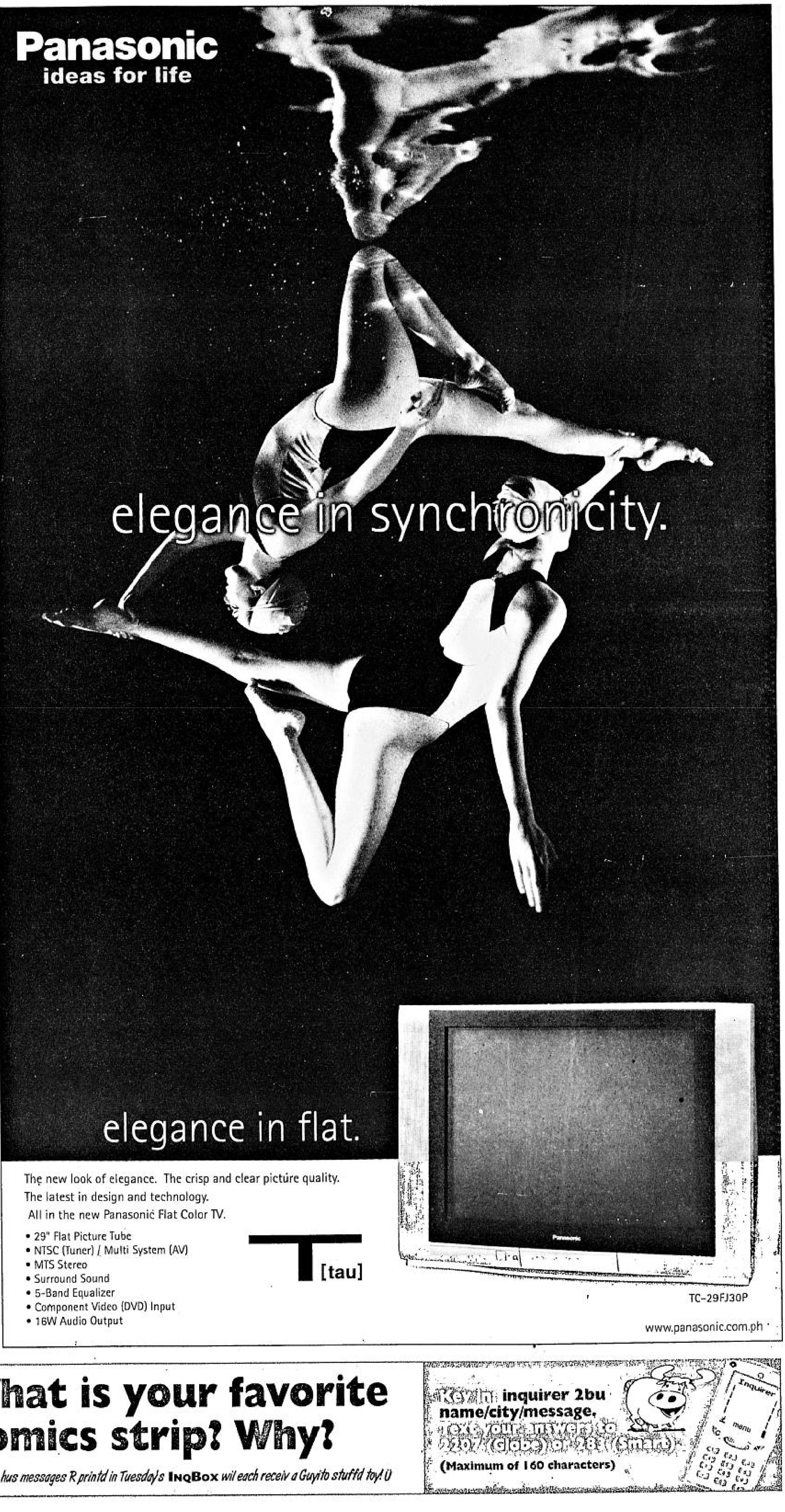
The bill is the first of eight measures being sought by Malacañang from Congress in a bid to raise fresh revenues. It is intended to raise about P9 billion.

The House ways and means committee, which Lapus chairs, has also wrapped up deliberations on another measure which provides for the so-called lateral attrition of personnel in government agencies.

The bill will make it easier to fire under-performing government personnel, particularly in the revenue-generating agencies like the revenue and customs bureaus, as it will tie their tenure with performance. Poor performance may be penalized by dismissal from service.

Short of abolishing public agencies, the bill would institutionalize management objectives and accountability and establish performance-based standards in inefficient agencies, said Lapus.

Despite opposition from former President Ramos and business leaders, the President is not changing her mind about the tax amnesty measure, her spokesperson said yesterday.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(Maximum of 160 characters)

Ombudsman blames 'typist's snafu,' includes agri chief

From page A1

worth of fertilizer.

Assistant Ombudsman Pelagio Apostol yesterday blamed the snafu on a "typist."

"We are checking on the delay in the process," he said in a phone interview when asked to explain the lapse of more than a month in the issuance of the order on Yap and the other respondents.

"He (Yap) is part of the complaint as the principal signatory of the documents. There was no malicious intent on the part of the Ombudsman to drop his name from the list of respondents," Apostol said, adding that Yap's name could not be dropped prior to the filing or dismissal of the case.

In a text message, Yap said he welcomed the order as it would give him a chance to clear his name and that of his office.

But in a separate phone interview, complainant Marlene Esperat said there had been an attempt to clear Yap, a former student of President Macapagal-Arroyo's at the Ateneo de Manila University, of liability in the alleged scam.

"If I did not react strongly to his non-inclusion in the list of respondents, they could have gotten away with that kind of strategy to clear the President's fair-haired boy," said Esperat, a former action officer of the resident ombudsman at the Department of Agriculture.

Citing her "Ombudsman sources," she said "the strategy would have worked if the media did not learn about it."

Esperat was referring to two separate orders from the Office of the Ombudsman dated Aug. 17 wherein it told the respondents to submit counter-affidavits because the complaint was "sufficient in form and substance."

Those ordered to reply to the complaint were former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante; Undersecretaries Edmund Sana, Ibarra Poliquit and Belinda Gonzales; DA legal service head Eduardo Garcia and chief accountant Ophelia Agawin; Jesus Varela; Benjamin Tabios; and businessman Pepito Alvarez, majority owner of the Philippine Phosphate Fertilizer Corp. (Philphos).

Yap's name was missing from the two orders, which listed the names of the nine other respondents four times.

Sept. 17 order

But three days after the issue hit the media, Assistant Ombudsman Apostol wrote the INQUIRER saying "there is no truth to the report" that Yap's name had been dropped from Esperat's complaint.

YAP: Chance to clear his name

"An order dated Sept. 17, 2004, requiring respondent Yap to file his counter-affidavit in answer to the charges hurled against him has been issued by this office," said Apostol, who heads the Preliminary Investigation and Administrative and Adjudication Bureau.

But not even Yap, whose office is near the Ombudsman's office in Quezon City, knew about the new order five days after it was supposedly released. Yesterday, the INQUIRER ran his press release wherein he expressed confidence that the other respondents would be cleared as well.

The order including Yap's name also said that Esperat's complaint was "sufficient in form and substance" and that the case would now proceed to the preliminary investigation phase.

Negotiated contract

In her complaint, Esperat said the respondents procured the fertilizer through a negotiated contract instead of a public bidding.

She said they had colluded to allow the government to buy P432 million worth of fertilizer from Philphos, a supposed "favored" supplier, for the rice-planting season of May-October 2003.

Esperat said the deal was also "tainted with overpricing, favoring a bidder and commissions."

She said the fertilizer was overpriced by about P100 per bag.

Escort girl tells Senate 2 lawmakers are clients

From page A1

male escort to take shabu before having sex.

The young woman also said regular clients of "escort services" included other congressmen, police generals and mayors, but she could not provide details.

Asked how the Senate might handle the issue henceforth, Estrada, a first-time lawmaker said: "This is a sensitive issue. We will study it first."

None of the other sexy movie starlets present at the hearing—Keana Reeves, Kriselda Kristel, Martha Daniels and Francine Prieto—made as stunning a revelation as Roque's.

Prieto, a fashion and commercial model who has made a few movies, told the committee that she was not engaged in escort services, but had served as an usher during functions of some big companies.

To 'walk' or not

Estrada later told reporters that Roque eventually identified the congressman, but still refused to say for certain that she had sexual intercourse with him.

After the closed-door session, Roque was likewise persuaded by reporters to recount encounters with her clients.

She met the congressman "face to face" in March. She said he had picked her and another female escort from among several women presented to him.

They were brought to a condominium unit, Roque said. After the congressman and the other escort had sex, he "got tired" and told Roque to just come back the following week.

"I did not come back," she said. "I came out of there crying." Not that she hadn't done it before, she said, citing two previous instances. But this time around, her pimp (she used the word "*bugaw*"), who was the other girl's aunt, had not told her that the congressman specified a "walk" or "wok," gay speak for sex.

Fishing for evidence

Roque's experience with the senator was not nearly as intimate. At the time that she was being fixed up with him, she and a few others were already gathering evidence to back up fellow escort Keanna Reeves' exposé about lawmaker clients. The Lower House had also passed a resolution ordering an investigation.

Speaking in Filipino, she recounted the plan: "I was to approach and ask for his name, observe his reactions, just to get proof that some politicians do hire girls. We wanted to have evidence before we faced any probe; our lives were at stake." Next, she called a pimp who assured her a deal could be made with the senator.

But Roque said she changed her mind after a date (last month) was set. She said the pimp did not insist, since he had already arranged for two other escorts to go instead.

"The place agreed upon was in Quezon City, but the senator changed his mind, and opted to take the girls to the province," said Roque.

She clarified that she had nothing against lawmakers. "It's the pimps that I'm angry at [because] they fool us, especially the new girls." The pimps got more than half of their earnings, she said.

Roque explained: a client pays P5,000 to P10,000 for "PR" or "chica," the term for entertainment without sex. Beyond that, he is charged up to P15,000. It goes without saying that a pimp gets a cut, but he or she can earn more by not declaring the total amount paid.

As for the drugs during jobs, Roque said the client provided it. "It depends on what is available." Some of her colleagues preferred the party pill "ecstasy," she said.

While she herself did not use drugs, she said, she would have done so, had she been compelled to have sex with the congressman. She did not elaborate.

My show, remember?

Under intense questioning by Senator Luisa Ejercito, the 33-year-old Reeves, who started it all, admitted that she was a professional hooker. But she said she did it to earn a living, and that she was not forced into it.

"I am old enough, after all," she said, speaking in Filipino.

Reeves told Ejercito that she made from P5,000 to P15,000, depending on the client's requirements.

"Per shot?" the incredulous senator burst out also in Filipino, eliciting laughter.

Reeves, who gave her real name as "Janette Derecho," said she did not mean to make trouble for the lawmakers; she just wanted to straighten out her life.

Child sex now rife in RP, senators told

From page A1

intent to gain profit.

"We're now crafting a national campaign plan to address this problem," Mendoza said, adding that a heightened crackdown on smut tabloids, sexually charged shows, and pirated CDs on pornography would be implemented to curb the rising incidence of child prostitution.

Law enforcement agencies as well as child welfare groups vowed to put up a united front to stop the sexual exploitation of children and pornography as a whole.

They include the PNP, National Bureau of Investigation, Presidential Anti-Illegal Recruitment Task Force, Coalition Against Trafficking of Women, Philippine Alliance Against Pornography (PAP), Philippine Center for Missing and Exploited Children, End Child Prostitution and Trafficking, and Stop Trafficking of Filipinos.

Patronage system

Asked by committee chair Sen. Jamby Madrigal whether politicians and powerful interests were behind the upsurge in child prostitution, Mendoza said: "We have not yet [found] the relationship ... but we have reason to believe that the patronage system is there."

Madrigal, who is drafting a law making the possession of child pornography, such as CDs and magazines, a crime, showed Mendoza and other police officials present at the hearing a copy of the Sisid tabloid showing "young children in a lesbian act."

"This is really disgusting," said the senator. "If we can't catch the supply, we better catch the demand."

Mendoza said it was possible that a "crime ring" was involved in the worsening problem.

He said PNP Director General Edgardo Aglipay had ordered him to ascertain whether there were politicians and men and women in the government service behind, or involved in, child prostitution.

He also said he was ordered to identify the source of narcotics used in child pornography after it was noted that some children were drugged prior to a movie shoot or pictorial.

'Japayukis'

Madrigal and such groups as the PAP also want the government and the private sector to restrain the noontime TV shows from exploiting children.

"This is really a disgusting crime that should be acted upon," said Madrigal, who pointed out that in these shows, young children were being made to dress like "*japayukis*" (Filipino women working as entertainers in Japan).

"They should be shown the correct side of life," she said.

PAP secretary Tita Reverente expressed hope that "something will happen finally."

She said pornography was proliferating because the public was not doing its share.

"A lot of people complain ... about movies or television commercials, but don't write or call to any of the offending programs or producers," she said.

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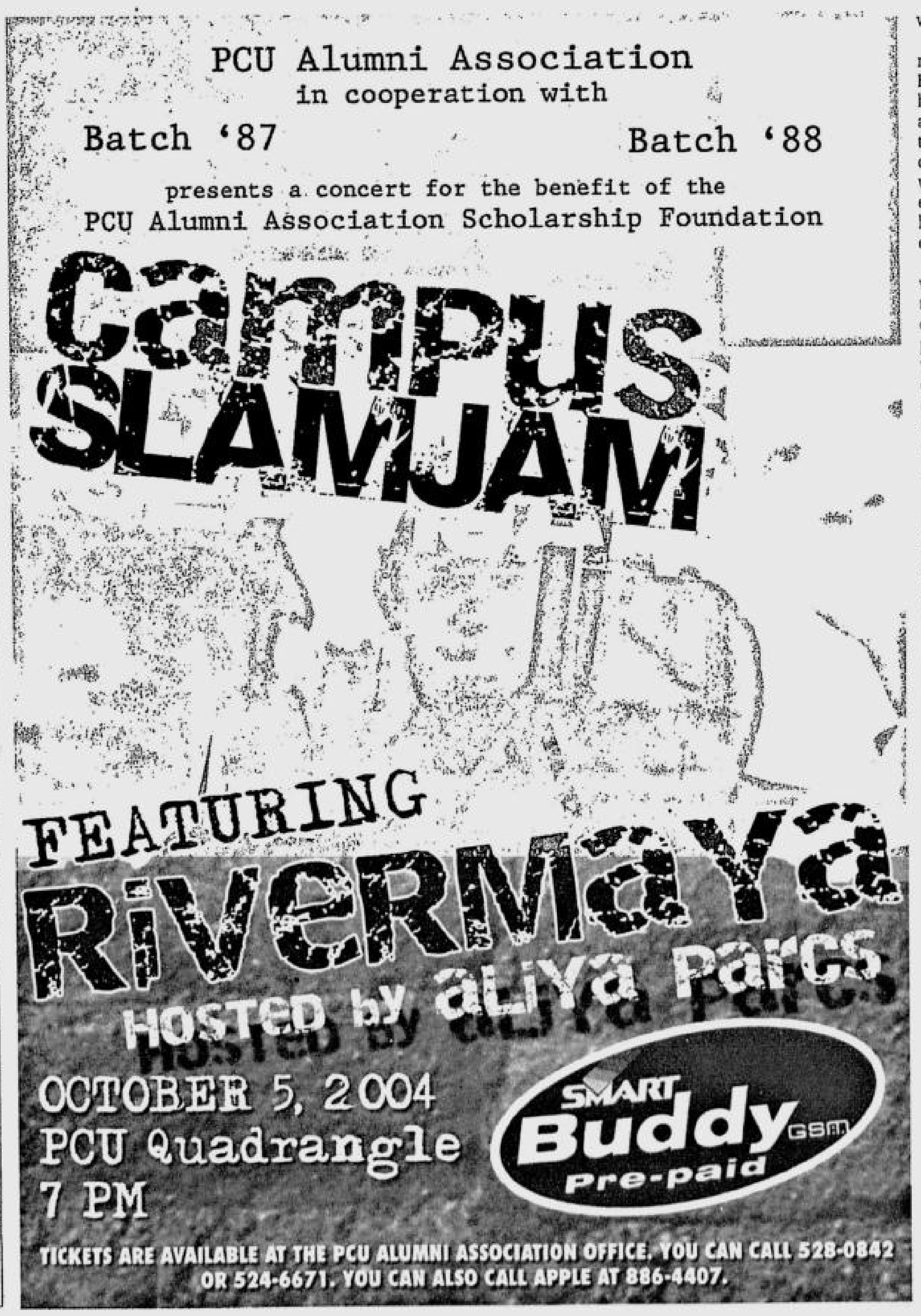

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Ramos faces off with Miriam today

But Smokey Mountain probe now under SC, says contractor

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine Avendaño

FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos and six other officials have been summoned by the Senate blue ribbon committee to shed light on the alleged P3.1 billion Smokey Mountain scam. But one of those summoned, businessman Reghis Romero II, said that while he welcomed the investigation, the case is now sub-judice because it is now under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

The hearing is scheduled for today with Sen. Miriam Santiago gearing up for a confrontation with Ramos, her nemesis. Ramos according to Santiago, was planning to attend the hearing but Romero, saying his constitutional rights would be violated, is not likely to attend.

Santiago had been a staunch critic of Ramos since the 1992 presidential elections where she claimed Ramos cheated her.

A joint committee composed of the blue ribbon, environment and natural resources, and government corporations and public enterprises committees—was authorized by the chamber to look into the allegations of Santiago that Romero of R-II Builders was awarded a lopsided contract by Ramos in 1999.

R-II Builders had reclaimed and developed the then Smokey Mountain in Manila Bay into a low-cost housing complex and industrial or commercial site. Summoned to the inquiry besides Ramos and Romero were Dionisio de la Serna, Ramos' housing czar, Roberto M. Aventajado, presidential adviser on flagship projects of the Estrada administration, Roberto Balao, Edmundo Sese and Vicente Suazo Jr.

De la Serna served as chair of the Executive Committee created to oversee the Smokey Mountain housing project in 1992. Aventajado took over as Executive Committee chair by 1999, said Santiago.

Ramos signature

Balao, as National Housing Authority (NHA) general manager during the period of negotiation, allegedly signed for the government all three versions of the assailed agreement. And Sese was implicated for being vice president of R-II Holdings' subsidiary corporations, R-II Builders, and Suazo as Harbor Center Port Terminal president.

Santiago said the alleged scam started in 1999 when Ramos authorized NHA to enter into a joint venture agreement with R-II Builders in connection with the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project. But Santiago said that the entire project turned into a "scam worse than the Amari case," because NHA had no authority to conduct negotiations with a private entity like R-II Builders.

She said that Amari paid the Philippine Estates Authority (PEA) the sum of P1.8 billion to buy reclaimed land, but in the R-II case, "in effect NHA paid Romero the sum of P3 billion, and then gave the reclaimed land to Romero."

In an earlier press conference, Romero denied that the deal was illegal because NHA had the authority to dispose the reclaimed land.

"The (deal) is a legitimate and valid project that underwent prescribed bidding procedures will full transparency," said Romero.

Romero said it was aimed to transform the "symbol of the country's poverty and social malaise into an showcase of decent living conditions of the onsite resident scavengers."

He explained that the project went through "rigorous and thorough public bidding process" and supervised by the PEA, Philippine Ports Authority and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Rights issue

In a press statement yesterday, Romero said he welcomed the investigation but urged the joint committee to grant his request to refrain from participating in the hearings to protect his constitutional rights.

Romero noted that the issues raised by Santiago in her privileged speeches were the same concerns aired by former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez in his earlier petition before the Supreme Court questioning the constitutionality of the project.

This, he said, means the case is now under the jurisdiction of the judiciary, and not the legislature.

Romero cited a previous Supreme Court ruling on the case involving Bengzon Jr. vs Senate blue ribbon committee that allowing a congressional panel to conduct its own investigation into an issue already before the courts "would not only pose the possibility of conflicting judgements between a legislative committee and a judicial tribunal" but would also subject the courts to undue influence by another coequal branch of government.

Thus, under the law, "the continuation of the Senate investigation would violate my constitutional rights," Romero said.

But Santiago said that the case of Bengzon vs Senate blue ribbon committee did not apply in Romero's case because this involved a matter of public interest.

"There is a pending SC case on same subject matter but because it involves a public interest, the case is not prejudicial in the investigation of the blue ribbon," she said.

Santiago said she would ask the committee to issue a subpoena to Romero.

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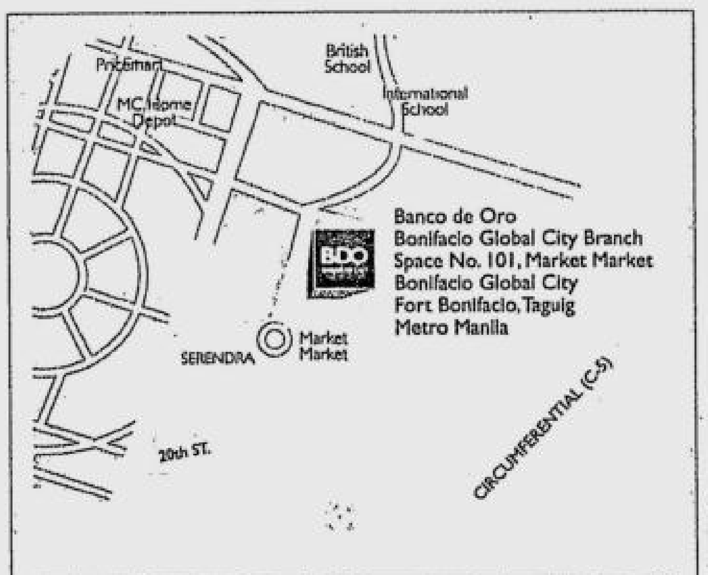

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OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Malacanang Palace, Manila

Dear Madame President,

The Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations, Inc. (CONFED) is the biggest federation representing more than 50% of the total number of sugar farmers in the Philippines today. We have always supported your programs in government and applauded your move when you appointed James Ledesma as Administrator for SRA three years ago.

Three years ago, we were a regular importer of sugar to supplement the shortfall of our domestic supply because our production was not enough to cover the requirements of domestic consumption. Mr. Ledesma corrected this. When he assumed his office as Administrator of SRA, his programs focused on productivity and production efficiency and today, we are already exporting sugar to the world market.

When Mr. Ledesma started as Administrator, our production was 1.6 million mt of sugar annually; this year, under his able leadership, we have produced 2.34 million mt of sugar. This is quite a substantial accomplishment considering that the Master Plan of the Sugar Industry projected domestic self-sufficiency within a 10-year time frame.

It is unfortunate that, at this time when the industry is supposed to unite and work together for the common good, we are still beset by "crabs" who try to bring our good leaders down. You, Madame President, have experienced this and continue to experience attacks from politicians with vested interests who have nothing constructive to offer.

This is what Mr. Ledesma is presently experiencing and for this reason we are rallying to support him knowing that he has done a lot to bring the sugar industry to where it is now and he will continue to provide the leadership that will eventually make our industry competitive.

We support Mr. Ledesma not only because of his leadership capabilities and his exemplary qualifications but also because of his unquestionable integrity. We also support Mr. Ledesma because of his unqualified commitment to work for the welfare of the sugar industry.

In this regard, Madame President, we hope that you will consider this position and retain the services of James Ledesma as Administrator of SRA. We cannot imagine any other person who would be as qualified, as capable, as committed and as honest to assume the leadership position in the sugar industry.

Thank you.

Reynaldo P. Bantug
National President

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Chairman, Luzon Chapter

Jose Luis J. Tongoy
Chairman, Negros Chapter

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Chavit says he has settled all cash advances

By Armand N. Nocum

ILOCOS Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson Monday said he had settled all "cash advances" he had made during his previous term as governor of the province.

In a statement, Singson also scored the lawyers of ousted President Joseph Estrada for trying to destroy his credibility as the prosecution's star witness in Estrada's plunder trial.

"They can look into the records; they're there for everyone to see. I have settled all these cash advances. Making such advances, as everyone knows, is not illegal—it becomes so only if these are not settled during a given time," Singson said.

Singson was reacting to the testimony of defense witness Agaton Dacayanan, former provincial auditor of Ilocos Sur, who testified that Singson had "unsettled cash advances" totaling P2,900,000 as of Dec. 31, 1995.

In an interview during a break in the trial, Estrada lead counsel Rene Saguisag said Singson had amassed P800 million more in unliquidated cash advances from 1995 to 1999.

He said Singson decided to tell all on Estrada, his former friend, to escape the unrelenting pressure being exerted on him by COA auditor Agustin Chan relative to his unliquidated cash advances. Chan was killed in an ambush in 2001.

"Estrada's lawyers are merely repeating all the lies they had previously raised in a vain attempt to destroy my credibility. They think that by [repeating] those lies, they can get the people to believe what they are saying is true," Singson said.

On the contrary, he said, it was "my credibility as a prosecution witness during the Estrada impeachment trial that helped bring down his corrupt regime. No amount of repeated lies can alter that."

Singson accused Estrada's lawyers of delaying his trial so the people would lose interest in it and "eventually forgive and forget."

"His lawyers are sadly mistaken; the patience of the people is wearing thin and further delays can make it snap," Singson said.

Yesterday, the trial resumed with defense lawyers continuing to assail the credibility of Singson to show that he blew the whistle on Estrada because he was already "cornered" by the COA on his unsettled cash advances of P29 million.

SINGSON

Media relations seminar for PSG

By Juliet L. Javellana

THE CHIEF of the Presidential Security Group yesterday said he would require all his men to undergo a seminar on "media relations" after an INQUIRER reporter filed a complaint of harassment against some members of the elite group providing security to the President and Malacañang Palace.

Col. Delfin Bangit, PSG commander, made the assurance in a letter to Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., a senior INQUIRER reporter assigned to Malacañang, who complained that he was held for one hour and barred from entering the Palace last Sunday.

After being held for one hour over an argument with some PSG guards on the conduct of their security check, Cabacungan was allowed to walk through Gate 6 toward the press working area in Kalayaan Hall only to be called back "in a condescending manner" because he was not in the Palace-prescribed dress code.

Bangit said his investigation showed that Cabacungan "got angry with my men as they did their job."

Still, he said he has "summoned the personalities involved and heard their sides and exhorted them to do their jobs with professionalism."

Bangit said remedial measures would be made to a repetition of the incident.

He said the commander of the Presidential Guards would meet with the Malacañang Press Corps, composed of the around 60 print, radio and television reporters covering Malacañang, to explain security procedures.

"We will require our personnel to undergo media relations and media handling seminars," Bangit said. He also designated Ltc. Enrico Rivera, head of the PSG Media Liaison Office, to ensure that the PSG would have an "interoperation" with the media.

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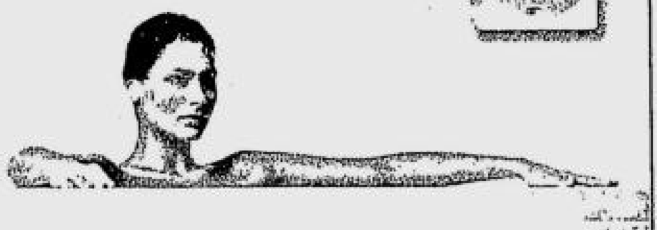

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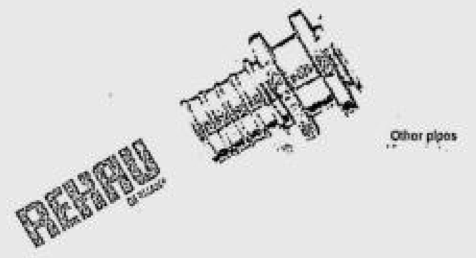

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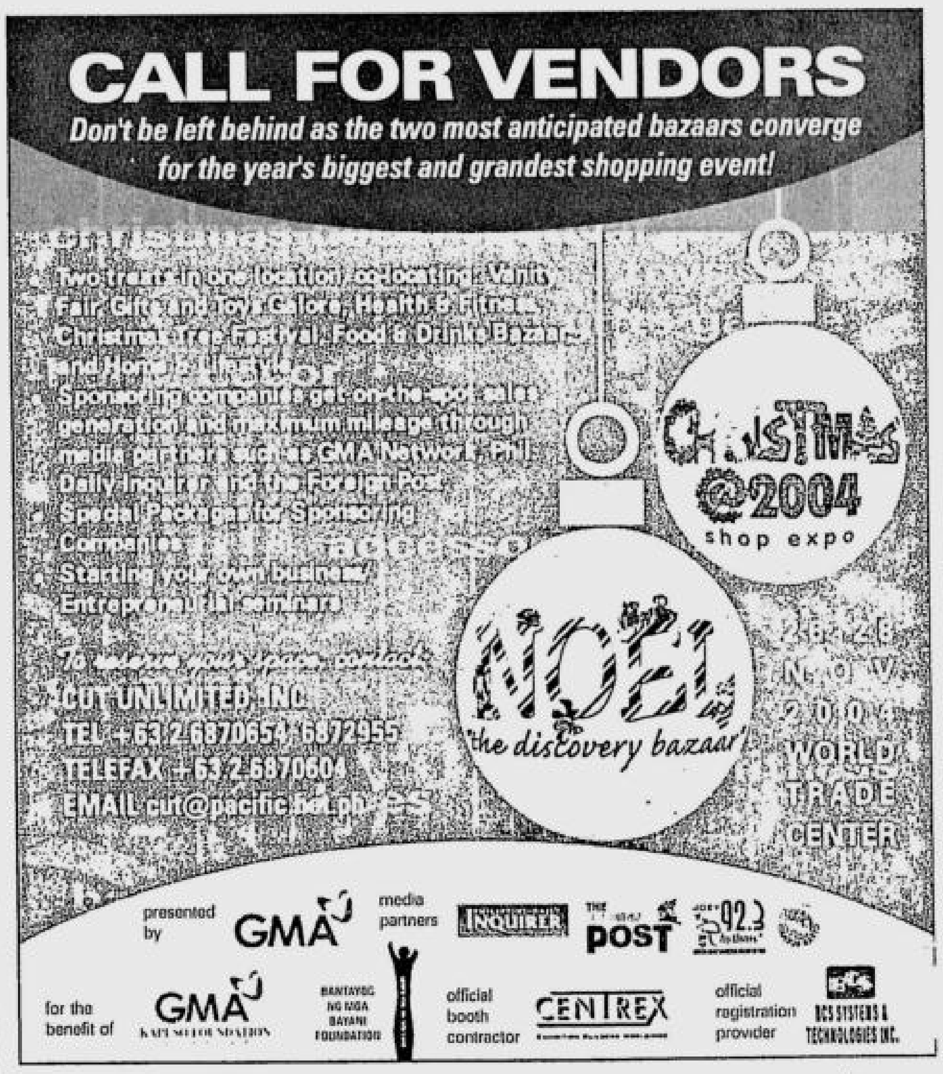

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NEW SCHEDULE OF DIVIDEND DECLARATION, DIVIDEND PAYOUT AND CCA (Formerly CCS Account) PLACEMENT PERIOD

To comply with the directive of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas dated June 9, 2004, to pay dividends on actual income earned as of date of declaration, the AFP Savings and Loan Association, Inc. (AFPSLAI) will adopt the quarterly computation of dividend and the quarterly payout effective third quarter of year 2004. The CCA (formerly CCS account) placement periods have been changed effective fourth quarter 2004.

AFPSLAI has approved a **new schedule** for the dividend declaration and dividend payout. The new scheme will be more beneficial to members because of earlier schedule of dividend payout.

The new schedule is as follows:

PLACEMENT PERIOD	APPLICABLE QUARTER	Dividend Declaration	NEW DIVIDEND PAYOUT	DIVIDEND PAYOUT as previously announced AUGUST 25, 2004
June 1-17, 2004	3rd Quarter 2004 (June 17-September 14)	October 15, 2004	October 25th onward	November 15, 2004
1st three working days of October 2004	4th Quarter 2004 (October-December)	January 15, 2005	January 25th onward	February 15, 2005
2005 ONWARD				
1st three working days of January	1st Quarter (January-March)	April 15	25th April onward	May 15
1st three working days of April	2nd Quarter (April-June)	July 15	25th July onward	August 15
1st three working days of July	3rd Quarter (July-September)	October 15	25th October onward	November 15
1st three working days of October	4th Quarter (October-December)	January 15	25th January onward	February 15

*This notice rescinds all other previously made announcements/schedules.

AFPSLAI MANAGEMENT

For further details, call 9116576 or 9112032 loc. 2308/2309; or visit AFPSLAI's website: www.afpslai.com.ph ; or e-mail address at cca_revisedskedu@afpslai.com.ph.

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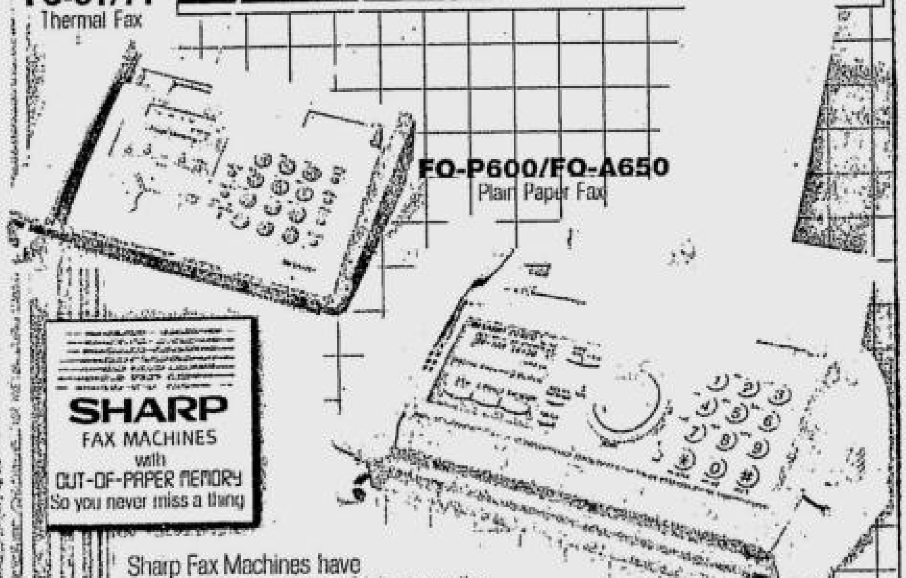

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Napocor key to solution of fiscal crisis–UP prof

From page A1

by an average of 98 centavos per kilowatt hour (kWh), just half of the P1.87 per kWh that Napocor petitioned for in June.

Felipe said he was surprised that the public had not raised much ruckus over the power rate increases.

"Just wait until they see the electric bills in the next few months," he said.

The new rate takes effect on Sept. 26 and the distribution utilities, particularly Meralco, will likely pass on the new rates to their customers by Nov. 1. But consumers will likely feel the effect of the rate increases only in January after Meralco and other power distribution firms have gone through the process of requesting rate adjustments, according to the ERC.

The government should explain the necessity of the higher power rates to the public, said Medalla, a former economic planning secretary.

"This is where leadership comes in. You can't convince people to pay higher electricity bills or pay more taxes if they see your *yayas* with you on a trip to China," he said, referring to the big contingent that accompanied President Macapagal-Arroyo on a recent trip.

Need for symbols

"We need symbols. In the long run, these symbols may not make much of a difference but the public has to see that government is also doing its part to alleviate our fiscal troubles," Medalla said.

He cited the pork barrel as an example. "Abolishing the pork barrel will not make a huge impact on our debts, but its impact on the public will be significant."

Medalla said he had sensed the sorry fiscal state of the country as early as February, but no one had anticipated that the Napocor problem would reach gargantuan proportions.

"Last year, I expected Napocor to be a P20 billion to P30 billion-a-year problem. I never expected it would become a P100 billion-a-year problem," he said.

He explained that Napocor's woes began when Ms Arroyo imposed a cap on Napocor's power purchase adjustment rates in 2002, which greatly reduced Napocor's revenues.

Shape up

Medalla said he was willing to bet P200 of the audience's P100 that there would be no economic crisis in two to three years.

"After all is said and done, government and Congress will see that the only way to avert the crisis is to shape up."

But Medalla then made a quick turnaround, saying "of course, many things can still go wrong."

Even if the national government assumes P500 billion of Napocor's debt, the state-run utility firm is still bent on seeking a rate increase next year.

In a document submitted to the Senate ways and means committee, Napocor enumerated its rate adjustments needed to wipe out its net loss.

Napocor said the provisional authority to raise its generation rates by an average of 98 centavos per kWh issued by the ERC on Sept. 3 would result in an increase of P1.2318 per kWh for Luzon, P0.2202 per kWh for the Visayas and P0.2665 per kWh for Mindanao.

Napocor said the rate adjustment would allow it to improve its financial condition, speed up privatization efforts and "attract new capacity" from the private sector.

But committee chair Sen. Ralph Recto said the public was told that after the 98-centavo per kWh increase in Napocor rates early this month, only a 98-centavo increase loomed on the horizon.

"Wrong. The subsequent increase would be much higher," Recto said in a statement.

Three scenarios

He then painted three scenarios envisioned by Napocor to ensure that its operations and financial condition would be viable despite its debts.

He clarified that the schedule of proposed tariff adjustments contained no provision for principal amortization, only interest expense, and no capital build-up for needed expansion of capacity to avert a power crisis in 2007.

First, should the national government absorb P500 billion of the Napocor debt (P598.58 billion), the corporation would still seek a P.7325 per kWh rate increase as early as January next year, according to Recto.

If approved, this would bring the effective rate to P4.2001 per kWh or a 68.77-percent increase from the pre-September rate of P2.4886 per kWh.

Recto said that despite the 2004 and 2005 increases, Napocor would still seek an additional increase of P.3673 per kWh in 2006, bringing to P4.5674 the per kWh cost that year under this scenario.

Second, if the national government does not absorb Napocor's debt, the firm would apply for P1.3075 per kWh increase as early as January next year.

If approved, this would bring the effective rate to P4.7761 per kWh or a 91.92-percent increase from the pre-September rate of P2.4886 per kWh.

Despite the 2004 and 2005 increases, Napocor will still seeks an additional increase of P.3173 per kWh in 2006, bringing to P5.0934 the per kWh cost that year under this scenario.

Third, Recto said that should the national government absorb only P200 billion of Napocor debt, the firm would still seek a P1.0775 per kWh rate increase as early as January next year.

If approved, this would bring the effective rate to P4.5461 per kWh or an 82.68-percent increase from the pre-September rate of P2.4886 per kWh.

Despite the 2004 and 2005 increases, Napocor will seek an additional increase of P.3373 per kWh in 2006, bringing to P4.8834 the per kWh cost that year under this scenario.

IN THE KNOW

THE INEFFICIENCY of government corporations has contributed more than a third (37 percent) to the build-up of the total public debt, according to a recent study by professors of the UP School of Economics.

Last year, 30 government corporations posted a combined loss of P140.2 billion. The biggest loss was incurred by the National Power Corporation, whose P113.2-billion net loss was about five times the combined loss of all the other losing corporations.

Top Losing Government Corporations, FY 2003* (in million P)

		Net Loss**
1.	National Power Corp.	P 113,232
2.	National Food Authority	7,585
3.	National Electrification Administration	6,423
4.	Light Rail Transit Authority	3,838
5.	Philippine National Oil Co.	2,947
6.	National Home Mortgage Finance Corp.	2,302
7.	Technology Livelihood & Research Center	490
8.	National Irrigation Administration	435
9.	Bases Conversion Development Authority	413
10.	Philippine Rice Research Institute	394
11.	National Tobacco Administration	292
12.	National Development Co.	282
13.	Philippine Coconut Authority	208
14.	Philippine Children's Medical Center	208
15.	Cultural Center of the Philippines	202
16.	National Kidney and Transplant Institute	164
17.	Philippine Heart Center	144
18.	Lung Center of the Philippines	135
19.	Center for Int'l Trade Expositions & Missions	87
20.	Sugar Regulatory Administration	74
21.	Philippine Convention & Visitors Corp.	70
22.	National Dairy Authority	59
23.	People's Television Network Inc.	52
24.	Zamboanga City Special Eco. Zone Authority	47
25.	Cagayan Economic Zone Authority	33
26.	Phil. Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care	32
27.	Philippine Institute for Development Studies	31
28.	Cottage Industry Technology Center	15
29.	Development Academy of the Philippines	9
30.	Philippine Crop Insurance Corp.	8
	TOTAL	P 140,211

**Includes only 48 of 76 GOCCs*
***Before taxes*
Source: Department of Budget and Management's Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing Fiscal Year 2005 (Tables)

COMPILED BY PDI RESEARCH

Nuclear plant, IPPs, GMA behind Napocor mess

From page A1

Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) project, for which the national government still pays $155,000 a day.

The late Conrado D. del Rosario, Napocor president in 1985-1986, recalled that the BNPP's original cost of $600 million was considered "on the high side" when the contract for supply and equipment was signed with United States-based Westinghouse Electric in 1976.

Del Rosario said added costs of transmission lines, fuel (uranium), site preparations, insurance as well as interest on loans—at 11 percent to 12 percent a year—pushed the total price to $2.1 billion.

He said that when the Aquino administration decided against operating the plant, it also agreed to a Napocor request that it assume the BNPP assets and liabilities.

In a paper outlining Napocor's financial history, Pajarillo said the company's debts started to mount amid the economic crisis in 1983.

At the start of that year, and even before Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was assassinated, Napocor was already facing problems in financing its projects.

This was due to the peso depreciation the previous two years and the reduction in fresh equity infusion from the government as part of the economic stabilization program then.

In the same year, the government's policy of debt moratorium resulted in the rescinding of four Napocor foreign loan commitments totaling $91 million and cancellation of undrawn balance on three loans totaling $14 million. Foreign banks also suspended Napocor's nine unused loans totaling $49 million.

Pajarillo said these precipitated the power crisis in the early 1990s because projects meant to add generation capacity could not be implemented.

Power outages

In 1990 and 1991, Napocor got a taste of what was to come due to massive power outages nationwide—it suffered a net loss of P65 million and P2.93 billion, respectively.

(The only previous years that Napocor incurred losses where in 1970 at P4 million and in 1971 at P1 million due to a peso devaluation.)

Efforts to solve the power crisis during the Ramos administration seemed to have stemmed the tide. In 1992, Napocor obtained 18 medium- and long-term financing plus three bridge loans.

BATAAN Nuclear Power Plant: The national government still pays $155,000 a day in interest alone.

Partnerships with private firms were also started through build-operate-transfer (BOT), build-operate-own (BOO), rehabilitate-operate-maintain (ROM), and rehabilitate-operate-lease schemes.

In 1992, Napocor rebounded with a net income of P4.1 billion.

In 1993, the state-firm tapped the world capital market for the first time. It issued a Eurobond worth $200 million. The next year, it floated a World Bank-backed Eurobond worth $100 million.

Biggest net income

Napocor posted its biggest net income in 1994 at P7.46 billion. That year, its power generation reached 30,620 gigawatthours.

Of the total electricity produced in 1994, 13.6 percent came from ROM and ROL plants and P15.3 percent from BOT and BOO plants. Thus, about 30 percent of Napocor electricity came from plants operated by independent power producers.

In 1995, Napocor made the rounds on the world financial market, obtaining a $100-million syndicated loan from JP Morgan.

Within the same year, Napocor launched $500 million in bonds. Then there was the pioneering 12-billion-yen bond obtained through the Asian Development Bank and underwriter Nomura International.

Pajarillo said that at that time, everything seemed to point to continuing growth for Napocor. Then the Asian financial crisis hit in 1997.

The following year, Napocor posted a net loss of P3.4 billion, which grew year after year until it reached P113 billion in 2003 alone.

Epira

In 2001, the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) was passed. It was touted as the answer to Napocor's woes.

Ironically, the years following the law's enactment saw measures which were supposedly meant to make power more affordable. But these just added more and more to Napocor's burden.

In 2001, Napocor reduced its rates by 30 centavos per kilowatthour as provided under Epira.

A year later, Malacañang ordered Napocor to peg its purchased power cost adjustment charges—the cost of electricity bought from independent power producers—to 40 centavos per kWh. The reduction cost Napocor tens of billions of pesos in losses.

Napocor continued to bleed. On Sept. 4, the Energy Regulatory Commission granted it the provisional authority to raise rates by an average of 98 centavos.

However, Napocor officials said the increase still did not reflect the true cost of electricity. The firm is asking for an increase of P1.87 per kWh.

Asked why electricity cost so much, Raphael Lotilla, president of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm), said: "For one, the Philippines is an archipelago. This inherent limitation makes it expensive to develop power infrastructure and provide services."

Overcapacity in Luzon

Energy does not come cheap, he said. "Fuel costs, whether it is petroleum, natural gas, geothermal or hydro. Even renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and biomass are costly. These are still not widely used because the technology involved cost so much," Lotilla said.

Finally, Lotilla said the current generation overcapacity in Luzon resulted in power plants not running at efficient levels.

Projections from Napocor and Psalm show that Napocor would suffer an average of P103.6 billion in losses a year over the next four years.

As far as things are going, it looks as though the companies are looking at consumers' pockets for the solution.

Cause of losses

Operating losses will also continue unless Napocor was allowed "reasonable recovery of its actual costs," officials said.

- Bataan nuclear plant: the original 1976 price of $600 million was considered "on the high side." Added expenses further bloated the cost to $2.1 billion. The government decided to mothball it but assumed the debts.
- National debt moratorium in 1983 wrote off $91 million in loan commitments and cancelled or suspended unused loans totaling $63 million.
- Power crisis resulted in net losses in 1990-1991.
- Partnerships with independent power producers (IPPs) started in 1990. According to the Institute of Popular Democracy, Napocor has lease obligation to IPPs totaling $11 billion.
- Asian financial crisis in 1997 started Napocor's streak of net losses of P3.4 billion in 1998.
- The government invited the Lopez Group to contract IPPs to ensure that the $4.6-billion Malampaya natural gas-to-power project would materialize. As a result, Napocor is now selling about half the electricity demand of Manila Electric Co., its biggest customer whose market makes up about 70 percent of the country's total demand.
- The power reform law of 2001 provided a mandatory power rate reduction of 30 centavos per kWh. Napocor data show that this resulted in P1.71 billion in lost revenue in the first seven months of 2002 alone.
- Labor Day 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that Napocor's purchased power cost adjustment—the cost of power it buys from IPPS would be frozen at 40 centavos per kWh—a reduction of 85 centavos per kWh. Napocor data show that this resulted in P4.5 billion in revenue losses in the first seven months of 2002 alone.
- In 2002, Napocor posted its first net operating loss.
- In its latest reorganization in 2003, Napocor covered P12 billion in separation benefits with fund from loans.
- September 2004, Napocor was granted a provisional authority to raise generation rates by an average of 98 centavos per kWh. Napocor is asking for a hike of P1.87 per kWh, which did not consider power costs from the new power plants 1,200-MW Ilijan, 140-MW Casecnan, 70-MW Bakun and 345-MW San Roque.

NAPOCOR FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (IN BILLION PESOS)

	Assets	Liabilities	Net Income/ Loss	Net Operating Income/Loss
1985	P107.6	P77.5	1.10	3.9
1986	125.6	90.9	0.72	4.3
1987	139.9	102.5	0.98	4.7
1988	133.7	99.8	1.67	5.6
1989	137.0	101.4	1.66	5.3
1990	160.5	127.5	-0.07	4.1
1991	170.6	133.5	-2.93	2.6
1992	203.2	135.4	4.12	7.1
1993	245.4	173.2	1.37	6.7
1994	289.2	185.0	7.46	12.1
1995	351.1	245.1	3.91	11.5
1996	457.7	358.7	5.54	13.3
1997	619.1	441.8	3.05	11.6
1998	646.1	445.0	-3.62	6.9
1999	862.4	645.0	-5.95	8.5
2000	989.8	777.8	-12.97	5.4
2001	1006.0	795.2	-10.38	6.8
2002	1153.0	971.4	-33.70	-2.4
2003			-113.23	-19.2
2004*			-114.6	-44.5
2005*			-85.92	-45.5
2006*			-102.26	-49.0
2007*			-111.78	-50.4

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bush demands UN help to fix Iraq

UNITED NATIONS—US President George W. Bush demanded Tuesday that the United Nations do more to help end the deadly chaos clouding Iraq's future, as he defiantly defended the US-led war to oust Saddam Hussein.

Days after UN Secretary General Kofi Annan declared the March 2003 invasion "illegal" under the world body's charter, Bush unapologetically told skeptical leaders here they must do more to help Iraq's fledgling interim government.

"The government of Prime Minister (Iyad) Allawi has earned the support of every nation that believes in self-determination and desires peace," said Bush, who was to host the Iraqi leader at the White House on Thursday.

Later, Bush and Allawi denounced the beheading of US hostage Eugene Armstrong by extremists in Iraq while warning that violence was expected to escalate before elections scheduled for January 2005.

But the president dismissed a gloomy US intelligence forecast for Iraq by saying the agency was "just guessing" when it warned of a possible civil war or—in the best scenario—tenuous political, economic and security stability.

"The CIA laid out several scenarios. It said that life could be lousy, life could be OK, life could be better. And they were just guessing as to what the conditions might be like," he said.

With just six weeks to the Nov. 2 election, Bush took aim at Democratic White House hopeful John Kerry, who has accused him of "colossal failures of judgment" that have wrought a "crisis of historic proportions" in Iraq.

"My opponent has taken so many different positions on Iraq that his statements are hardly credible at all," said the president, who frequently charged that Kerry is fickle on crucial national security issues.

In his speech, Bush urged UN members to heed two recent Security Council resolutions, including one in June 2004 that endorsed the interim Iraqi government and a multinational force to keep order.

"The UN and its member nations must respond to Prime Minister Allawi's request and do more to help build an Iraq that is secure, democratic, federal and free," said Bush, whose address drew applause only when it ended.

Bush said democracy in Iraq would spread across the Middle East and, in a rare rebuke, urged staunch US ally Israel to freeze settlements in the West Bank and Gaza and to end the "daily humiliation" of Palestinians. *AFP*

Baghdad car bomb kills 11

BAGHDAD—A car bomb exploded outside a restaurant in a busy commercial area of Baghdad on Wednesday, killing at least 11 people and wounding 40, police and hospital officials said.

The blast destroyed several stores and sent thick black smoke spiraling into the sky. Shards of glass and debris littered the street in western Baghdad.

US soldiers riding armored vehicles cordoned off the area and firefighters doused water on burning cars. At least 10 cars were destroyed, one of them flipped upside down.

"I was just standing here talking and then I heard two huge explosions," said Humam Abdul-Hadi, who owns an electrical goods store near the bomb site. He said an ice cream restaurant had taken the brunt of the blast.

"I don't even know who they were targeting," said Abdul-Hadi, who had shrapnel wounds to the face and neck and blood spattered on his T-shirt. "They just bombed people eating ice cream."

At nearby Yarmuk hospital, morgue officials showed Reuters correspondent Mariam Karouny 11 corpses brought from the blast site. *Reuters*

Cambodia hit by bird flu anew

VEAL SBOV, Cambodia—A deadly bird flu virus, which has killed 29 Asians this year, has reappeared in Cambodia and the government is deeply worried because villagers ate birds that had died of it, officials said on Wednesday.

People in this village just outside the capital Phnom Penh, including the owner of a farm where 5,000 chickens died in two days, said they took dead birds, cooked and ate them.

Experts say eating chicken that died of the bird flu is safe, provided it is cooked to an internal temperature of at least 70 degrees Celsius.

All those who have died of the H5N1 virus, which has also recurred in Thailand, Vietnam and China in recent weeks as well as striking in Malaysia for the first time, were infected by the virus from handling birds that had died of it. *Reuters*

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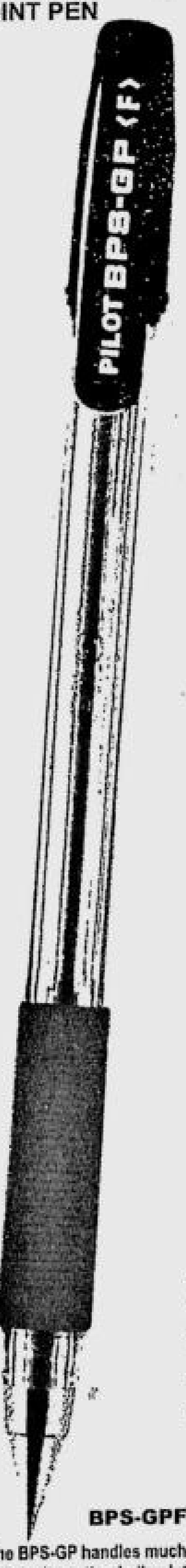

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Laws protecting civilians 'shamelessly disregarded'–Annan

UNITED NATIONS—With terrorism on the rise and hate propaganda targeting Jews and Muslims, Secretary General Kofi Annan opened the UN General Assembly by warning world leaders that basic laws to protect civilians are being "shamelessly disregarded" around the world from Iraq and Sudan to Russia and Uganda.

In a somber speech Tuesday before presidents, prime ministers and ministers from 191 nations, Annan said the prevalence of massacres, hostage-takings, attacks against innocent children and cold-blooded murders puts "all of us to shame" and reflects "our collective failure to uphold the rule of law."

To restore respect for basic laws that protect the poor and keep the strong from oppressing the weak, "we must start from the principle that no one is above the law, and no one should be denied its protection," Annan said. "Every nation that proclaims the rule of law at home must respect it abroad; and every nation that insists on it abroad must enforce it at home."

At this year's General Assembly ministerial meeting, world leaders are confronting a depressing global agenda dominated by new terrorist threats, a humanitarian disaster in Sudan, turmoil in Iraq, and a growing gap between the richest and poorest inhabitants of planet Earth.

Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai said Afghanistan still has many hurdles to overcome, including combating poverty, illiteracy and terrorism but he called the country's first post-Taliban elections on Oct. 9 "the most significant milestone in our journey" toward democratic government.

But he warned that "As long as terrorism continues to exist in our region, neither Afghanistan, nor our neighbors, nor, indeed, the rest of the world, can be safe."

Several leaders praised Annan's call for the rule of law, and Bush's focus on promoting democracy and combating terrorism.

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who spoke just before Bush, warned again that there would be no peace in the world until a more just economic and democratic world order is established.

"Peace will never rise from poverty and hunger," he said.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, when asked his reaction to the Bush speech, said: "I think it's very important what Kofi Annan said about the rule of law in the 21st century so I don't want to go more into the details because this would be very unpolite."

Tanzania's President Benjamin Mkapa said dozens of leaders at a meeting Monday agreed that "globalization has produced both striking achievements and harmful distortions in global growth and development."

"We all agreed that, left unchecked, globalization will exacerbate the wealth gap—within and between nations—thereby planting the seeds of social instability and crime on a national and global scale," he said.

In his speech, Annan told world leaders that "today the rule of law is at risk around the world."

"Again and again, we see laws shamelessly disregarded—those that ordain respect for innocent life, for civilians, for the vulnerable—especially children," he said.

Annan pointed to the violence in Sudan's western Darfur region, which the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. *AP*

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (upper right) proposes a toast as President Bush looks during a luncheon for world leaders attending the opening day of the 59th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Sept. 21 at the UN headquarters in New York. AP

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Death toll in Haiti floods climbs to more than 700

GONAIVES, Haiti —Bodies lay in growing piles outside morgues as UN peacekeepers planned the first major distribution of food and water Wednesday in this city devastated by floods that tore apart families and left hungry crowds that have mobbed truckloads of aid.

The death toll from deluges unleashed by Tropical Storm Jeanne climbed to more than 700, Haitian officials said Tuesday, with more than 600 of them in Gonaives alone. More than 1,000 others were declared missing.

Carcasses of pigs, goats and dogs still floated in muddy waters slowly receding from the streets in Gonaives, Haiti's third-largest city with some 250,000 people. Not a house escaped damage. The homeless sloshed through the streets carrying belongings on their heads, while people with houses that still had roofs tried to dry scavenged clothes.

Flies buzzed around bloated corpses piled high at the city's three morgues. The electricity was off, and the stench of death hung over the city.

Relatives waited outside a morgue set up in the flood-damaged General Hospital all day to identify and bury victims. But vehicles to carry bodies to the cemetery never arrived. Most bodies remained unidentified.

Destilor Aldajus, a 50-year-old farmer, said he and his six children climbed onto their roof to escape the floods. But he was at the morgue looking for his wife.

"I couldn't find her, but I knew the water had taken her," he said.

Red Cross volunteers put more than 100 bodies into body bags, leaving them in a pile outside the morgue.

"We're going to start burying people in mass graves," said Toussaint Kongo-Doudou, a spokesperson for the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti.

Renel . Corvil, a 32-year-old farmer, said he had come to the morgue every day since Saturday to look for his four missing children. On Tuesday, he found them. But after waiting all day for bodies to be taken to the cemetery, he left to bury a fifth child that already had been transported to the graveyard.

As they waited, survivors exchanged tales. "Everyone in my neighborhood who survived had climbed a tree," Corvil said.

Waterlines up to 3 meters high on Gonaives' buildings marked the worst of the storm that sent torrents of water and mudslides down denuded hills, destroying homes and crops. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Yudhoyono maintains lead in polls

JAKARTA—Former Gen. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono remains on track for a landslide victory in Indonesia's first ever presidential elections, holding a steady lead Wednesday with about two thirds of votes counted. Of 90.8 million votes tallied so far, Yudhoyono accounted for 61 percent compared to 38 percent for incumbent Megawati Sukarnoputri. About 153 million people were eligible to vote in the elections, with initial estimates putting turnout at 80 percent. The final outcome from the election is not expected for days as results trickle in from across the vast Southeast Asian archipelago, but pollsters believe it is unlikely to change significantly. The Washington-based National Democratic Institute and its Indonesian partner, think tank LP3ES, predicted pre-poll favorite Yudhoyono would finish with 60.2 percent of the vote compared with Megawati's 39.8 percent. *AFP*

Al-Qaida operative got Australian visa

CANBERRA—A top al-Qaida operative acquired a visa to visit Australia a month before Sept. 11, 2001, raising fears the terror group was actively plotting to strike the US ally, the government said Wednesday. It was not believed that Khalid Shaikh Mohammed traveled to Australia after being granted the visa in the name of an alias from the Australian High Commission in Pakistan, officials said. Khalid, one of Osama bin Laden's senior commanders, was arrested in Pakistan in February 2003 and is in US custody. He has been indicted over a foiled plan to blow up 11 US commercial airliners flying from Southeast Asia to the United States in 1995. "It concerns me that it happened," Prime Minister John Howard told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. "Certainly everything is more effective (in issuing visas) as a result of all the changes that were made since Sept. 11, however the aliases involved were not known at the time and of course a lot more is now known." Khalid's visa was canceled about a year after it was issued when authorities found out about the use of the alias, Attorney General Philip Ruddock said. *AP*

Brazil, Germany, India, Japan seek UN seats

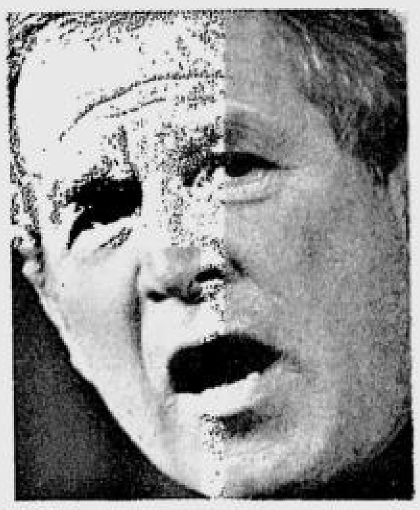
NEW YORK—Brazil, Germany, India and Japan launched a united bid Tuesday for permanent UN Security Council seats, arguing that expanded membership was crucial to addressing new global threats. A joint declaration said all four countries, "based on the firmly shared recognition that they are legitimate candidates for permanent membership in an expanded Security Council, support each other's candidature." The statement followed a meeting between Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, and the Indian and Japanese prime ministers, Manmohan Singh and Junichiro Koizumi, at a New York hotel on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Their proposal, which also envisages a permanent seat for Africa and an expansion of the non-permanent Council membership, would represent the largest shake-up at the top decision-making body of the United Nations in its nearly 60-year history. Reform of the 15-nation Security Council has the firm support of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who set up a high-level panel that is scheduled to offer concrete proposals for change in December. The council has had the same five permanent members with veto power—Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States—since the United Nations was established in the wake of World War II. *AFP*

2 Iraqi women from jail may be freed

BAGHDAD—Iraqi authorities together with US forces have decided to free one of only two high-profile women prisoners currently in American custody, a ministry spokesperson said Wednesday. Ministry spokesperson Noori Abdul-Rahim Ibrahim, however, denied the decision was linked to a demand by militants who abducted two Americans and a Briton calling for the release of all female Iraqi prisoners. "The Iraqi authorities have agreed with coalition forces to conditionally release Rihab Rashid Taha on bail," Ibrahim said. Taha, a scientist who became known as "Dr. Germ" for helping Iraq make weapons out of anthrax, and Huda Salih Mahdi Ammash, a biotech researcher known as "Mrs. Anthrax," are the only two Iraq women held in American custody, according to the US military. *AP*

Asian-American voters favor Kerry, says poll

KERRY


BUSH

LOS ANGELES—Asian-Americans voters favor Democrat John Kerry for president against incumbent George W. Bush, the first national survey of the largely untapped segment of the US electorate showed Tuesday.

The survey, conducted for the Los Angeles Times and published on its website, said that of six million eligible Asian-American voters, around 43 percent would pick Kerry for president against 36 percent for Bush.

But the poll, conducted by the Tarrance Group, Bendixen and Associates and New California Media between Aug. 20 and 30, also indicated that as many as one in five of them were still undecided about who to vote for on Nov. 2.

The multi-cultural population group was not unanimous in their support of the Democrat, with Chinese, South Asian and Japanese-American voters tilting toward Kerry, while Vietnamese, Korean and Filipino Americans were more in favor of Bush.

While Asian Americans remain a small voting block with only around three million expected to register to vote, their ballots could have some influence over the outcome of the election, the poll showed.

About 20 percent of Asian-American voters remained undecided, a figure that could prove significant as 22 percent of them, or 525,000, live in key battleground states such as Florida and Michigan and could influence the tightly fought polls.

"Traditionally, neither party has spent much effort reaching out to Asian Americans," said David Lee, executive director of the Chinese American Voters Education Committee, which helped support the poll.

"As a result I think you have a very large untapped population," he added.

The survey also indicated that while Asian Americans were largely inclined to vote Democratic in the 2000 presidential race, that balance had thinned in 2004.

Democratic candidate Al Gore had a lead of around 14 percent over Bush in support from Asian Americans in 2000. Kerry, however, has currently mustered only a 7-percent advantage, the poll showed.

The poll of 1,004 registered voters was conducted in nine languages across 47 states in the 10 days ahead of the Republican National Convention held in New York from Aug. 30 to Sept. 2, and had an overall margin of error of around 3 percent.

The survey also indicated that the key electoral issue for Asian Americans—many of whom are new immigrants to the United States—was the economy.

About 47 percent of those surveyed said jobs and the economy were the single biggest issue for the next president, while only 22 percent picked the Iraq conflict or the war on terrorism.

The survey indicated that nearly one million more Asian Americans were expected to register to vote this year than in 2000, when 2.4 million signed up. *AFP*

Young Filipinos protecting the environment

To many of us, an unspoiled environment is just one of our rich memories of childhood. But to an increasing number of young people, this image need not be just a memory. An unspoiled environment should be a continuing and lasting legacy for future generations.

This year, 13 students from various colleges and universities in the country are joining the growing number of Bayer Young Environmental Envoys (BYEEs) aware of the need to protect the environment. They will join other student envoys from across Asia, Latin America, and Europe in a continuing journey of environmental protection and preservation that started when they participated in the search for excellence in environmental awareness and care.

A study trip to Germany as main attraction

Without doubt, the main attraction in the BYEE search is the weeklong all-expense-paid study tour of Germany from November 27 to December 3 this year for the top five of the 13 student envoys. The top five Philippine envoys will be part of a 50-student contingent from 12 countries that include: China, India, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Korea, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Poland.

As part of the program, the lucky envoys will learn about the three major components in the development of industrial environmental protection. These are product-integrated and process- integrated environmental protection, as well as "end-of-pipe" waste management. Shorn of technical jargon, the trip is a rare opportunity for young people to get first hand impressions of the broad spectrum of environmental protection measures that government and industry use in highly advanced countries like Germany.

The program starts at Bayer's headquarters in the city of Leverkusen, Germany, where the student envoys will visit the company's state-of-the-art facilities, including the management of waste from its various production processes. The envoys will have the chance to observe how a former landfill is being converted into a public park as part of a "land remediation" process. The students will also visit Bayer's agricultural center to see how products are continually being developed or refined with the objective of making them environment friendly through the "Eco-Check," a system that assesses the ecological impact of Bayer's products to the environment. The envoys will also visit the municipal waste management facilities of Leverkusen to learn about citizen education programs on waste management and see for themselves how residents go out of their way to segregate solid waste for processing in recycling centers.

A highlight of the trip is a cruise of the River Rhine on board the laboratory ship of Germany's State Environment Protection Agency to observe water quality testing.

Part of a broader effort to promote environmental protection

The trip to Germany is just a component of the package meant to keep the student envoys busy in environmental protection programs. It is because participation in the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Program requires continuing involvement and commitment. Student envoys take part in a sustainable international program that relies on networking to ensure its continuity. The program ensures this by making all student envoys members of the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Club -- a formal organization of incumbent and past BYEEs who network to discuss and pursue environmental projects and issues. They are given access to the BYEE website complete with bulletin board and chat room facilities. Those without access to Internet can rely on the twice-yearly BYEE newsletter for all BYEEs in Asia. The Philippines, at present, has 56 BYEEs from over 20 provinces throughout the country.

The search for this year's BYEEs started when college students from all over the Philippines were asked to submit essays on their personal contributions to the environment and how these have made a difference in their communities and the country. Short-listed candidates were asked to come for interviews to enable the judges to validate the content of their essays and gauge the extent of their environmental awareness and involvement.

Beginnings

The Young Environmental Envoy Program originated in Thailand in 1995 as a project to educate the youth in the global efforts to save and protect the environment. In 1996, Bayer joined the program as a corporate sponsor. In 1997, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), through its regional office for Asia Pacific, adopted the program under its umbrella.

UNEP
PARTNERS
PRESSE
KONFERENZ

From left, Werner Wenning, chairman of Bayer's Management Board; Prof. Klaus Toepfer, UNEP executive director; and Dr. Udo Oels, Board Member of Bayer with responsibility for the Environment, announce the Bayer-UNEP partnership for youth environmental education.

In 2001, the program was extended to the Philippines and Singapore. The following years saw the participation of envoys from India and China.

This year, the partnership between UNEP and Bayer moved into a global level. Bayer, thus, became the first private sector organization to become a UNEP partner in environmental education projects for young people. Prof. Klaus Toepfer, UNEP executive director, and Werner Wenning, chairman of Bayer's Management Board, signed the historic agreement in June this year.

Today, UNEP and Bayer have a close partnership in various initiatives, related to the environment, for the youth. These include the Art and Writing Competition for young people to stimulate worldwide attention on the cause of the environment in commemoration of World Environment Day.

On a continuing basis, through the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Program, UNEP and Bayer hope to identify youth leaders in environmental protection; provide the youth with opportunities to learn about existing technologies, facilities and practices; facilitate networking and exchange of views and experiences in environmental protection among the youth; and encourage youth leaders to establish activities or programs to promote environmental awareness and protection.

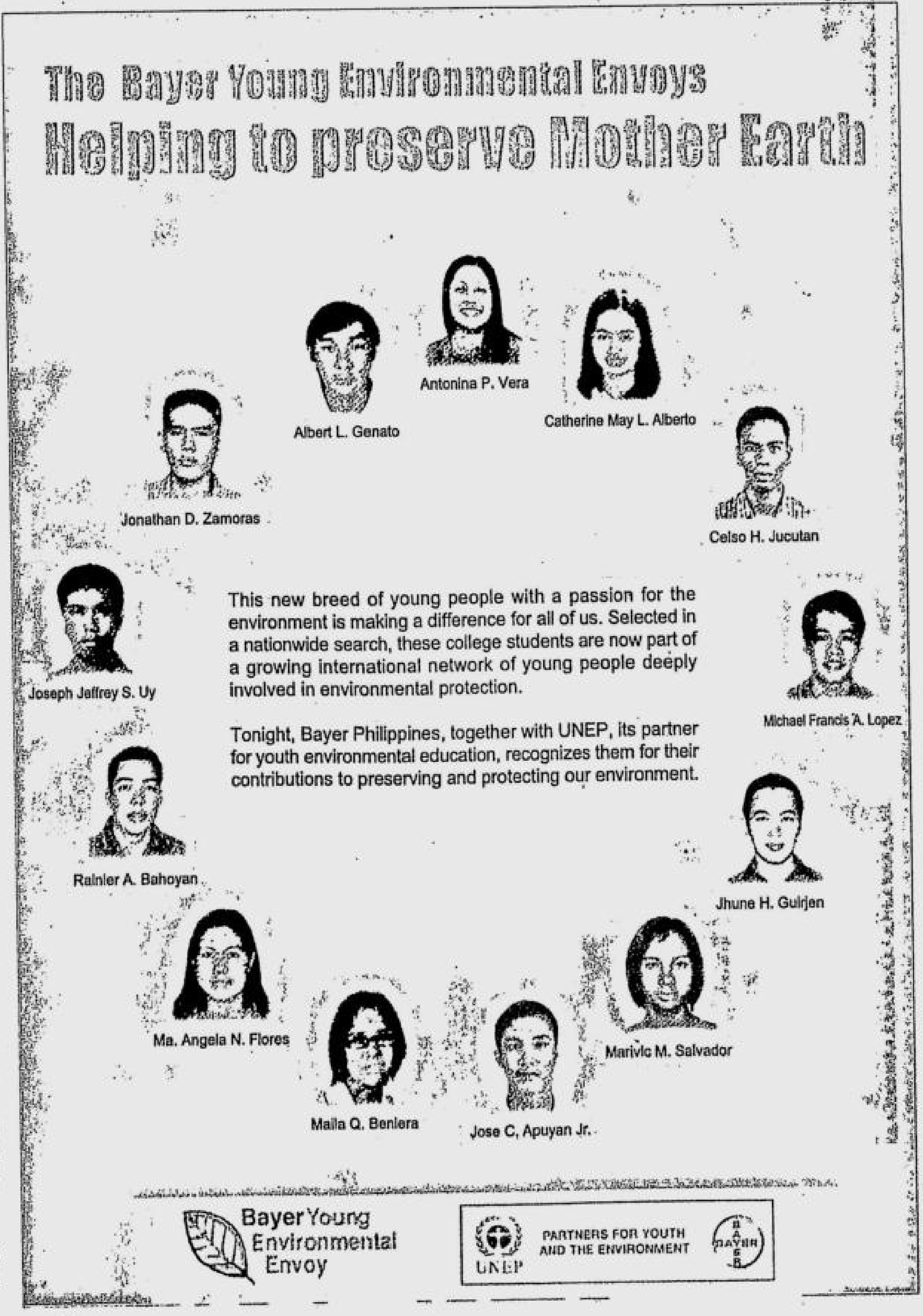
Ongoing projects

Protecting the environment has become a passion for an increasing number of young people. A couple of examples are worth mentioning.

Janice Lao, who works as an environmental scientist at Maunsell Philippines, became the first Filipino to be admitted to the masters program in Environmental Change and Management at Oxford University through a full scholarship under the Shell Centenary Chevening Scholarship Fund.

Gilbert Hamera of Zambales founded the Chemical Engineers for Kalikasan (ChELikasan) to spearhead a campaign called *Bantay Usok, Sagip Hangin* in Baguio. He also initiated a project on the use of industrial waste catalysts to produce low cost regenerated catalysts for petroleum refineries. This earned for him the Tower of Excellence for Outstanding Plant Design given by the Philippine Institute of Chemical Engineers-Junior Chapter.

The young people are taking greater responsibility in leading their communities in environmental care and developing in their peers the same love and concern for the environment. And their elders can only watch and guide them with approval.


The Bayer Young Environmental Envoys
Helping to preserve Mother Earth

Antonina P. Vera
Albert L. Genato
Catherine May L. Alberto
Jonathan D. Zamoras
Celso H. Jucutan
Joseph Jeffrey S. Uy
Michael Francis A. Lopez
Rainier A. Bahoyan
Jhune H. Guirjen
Ma. Angela N. Flores
Marivic M. Salvador
Maila Q. Beniera
Jose C, Apuyan Jr.

This new breed of young people with a passion for the environment is making a difference for all of us. Selected in a nationwide search, these college students are now part of a growing international network of young people deeply involved in environmental protection.

Tonight, Bayer Philippines, together with UNEP, its partner for youth environmental education, recognizes them for their contributions to preserving and protecting our environment.

Bayer Young Environmental Envoy
UNEP PARTNERS FOR YOUTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT BAYER

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OPINION

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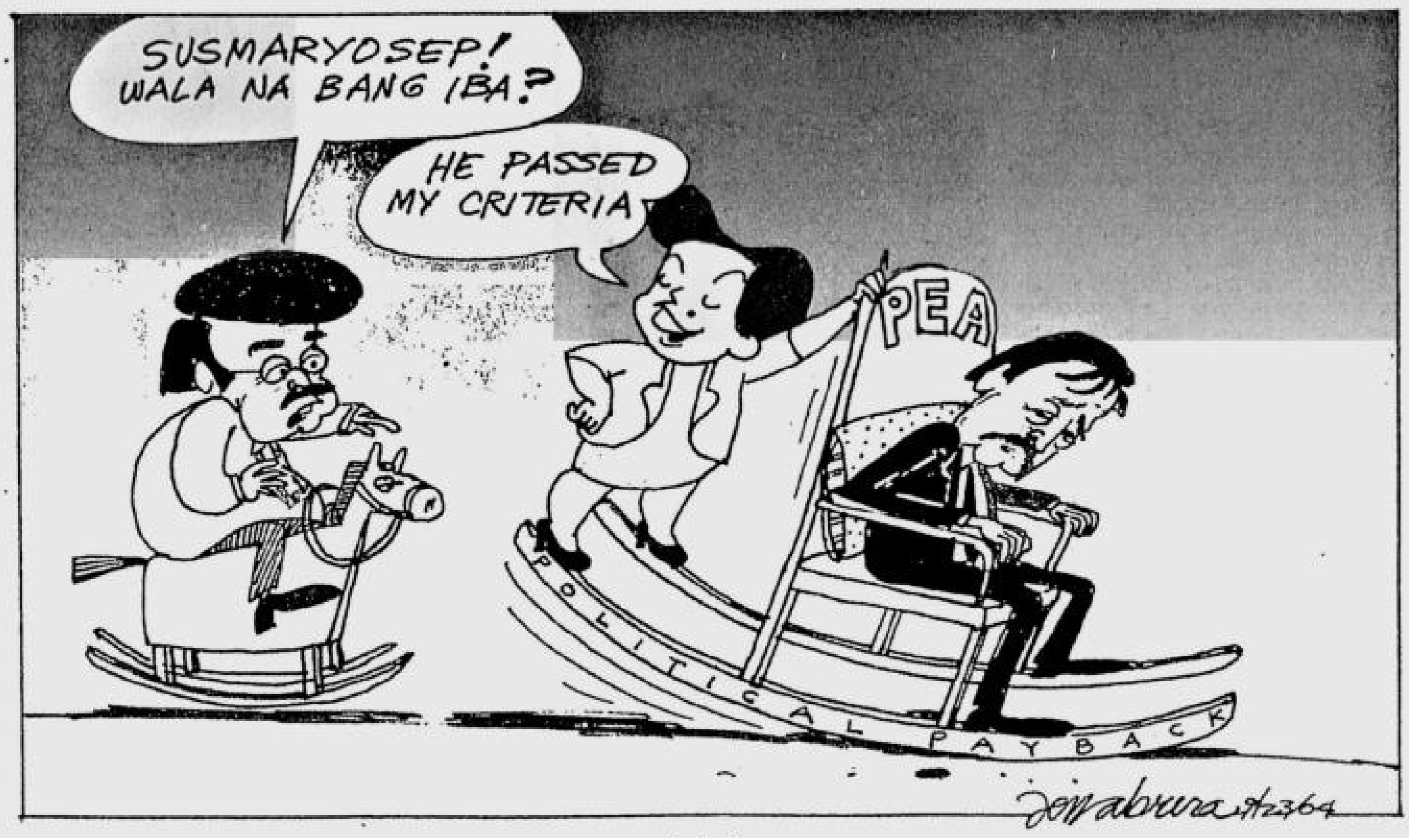

Books for burning

EDITORIAL

IF former President Joseph Estrada is thinking of putting out a sequel to his popular "Eraptions," he ought to consider including the following items:

- In India, there is a class of people who cannot be touched (*"hindi magalaw"*).
- The sitar is a musical instrument whose strings are made from teakwood.
- Warlords are people who own land.
- Ramadan is not the holy month of fasting as Muslims know it to be, but a commemoration of the occasion when "Muhammad" accepted the holy writ written in Arabic.
- Sun Yat Sen founded the Chinese Communist Party.
- Mao Tse-tung conquered China and turned it into the most populous communist country in the world.

Funny? Well, yes—until one finds out that these are contained not in a book of jokes, but in a high school textbook used in all public high schools. In other words, these are some of the lessons second-year high school students will absorb and perhaps carry with them for the rest of their lives, unless their teachers know enough and care enough to correct these errors contained in the prescribed textbook for "Heograpiya, Kasaysayan and Kultura."

Such mistakes do not come few and far between in the textbook, "Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap," published by SD Publications and printed in Thailand. Antonio Calipjo Go, academic supervisor of the Marian School of Quezon City, has counted a total of 431 errors in the book of 316 pages or an average of more than one error per page, including passages that are confusing or simply unintelligible. In fact, some information contained in the books can be downright insulting and incendiary to some people. For instance, how do the Chinese feel about being described as a people who like to use opium? And how do Muslims feel about being told that many Islamic ideas come from Judaism, Christianity and the Old Testament as well as from the Virgin and St. Michael? Or that many of their mosques were designed by Christian architects and are lavishly decorated?

Go, who has made it his personal crusade to denounce substandard textbooks being used in both public and private schools, came out with a paid ad Monday branding the distribution of the textbook as an "invisible crime." And indeed it is a crime, in more ways than one. Out of carelessness or ignorance, the authors have been spreading wrong information about geography, history and culture. If these are the things students learn, then truly ignorance is bliss. At least those who don't get such lessons wouldn't get confused when they know the truth.

And the Department of Education is abetting the spread of ignorance by approving the textbook for use in public secondary schools, the only one on this particular subject that has such an official imprimatur. But doesn't the DepEd have a committee of experts who read and review textbooks before they are approved for use in schools? Where were they when this book was reviewed, or were all of the committee members blissfully unaware of all the 431 errors in this one single textbook?

If the DepEd still thinks that its principal duty is to impart the right education, it should immediately order the recall of this textbook from schools and bookstores. If the government bought copies of the textbook and distributed them to public schools, it should order the publisher to withdraw them and reimburse whatever amounts were paid, as required by the Government Procurement Reform Law. Then it should burn them before the minds of millions more of our students are poisoned by all the wrong information it contains.

Targeting symptoms

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE KILLING of innocent civilians is as odious in Russia as it is in Nairobi or New York or Madrid or Baghdad or Tel Aviv or Gaza or Cape Town. But it seems clear that such attacks are likely to continue, from a variety of sources and in a variety of countries, for the foreseeable future.

Three years on from Sept. 11, one lesson must be that the world will get nowhere if it targets the symptoms rather than the root causes of such attacks. The latter are more often rooted in long-standing injustices inflicted upon entire peoples.

Washington's "war on terror" is fanning the flames of such attacks in the Middle East and around the world. The most dangerous elements of the so-called Bush doctrine were announced within days of Sept. 11: that countries were either "with us or against us," and that the US military would strike preemptively, wherever and whenever it wanted.

The Bush administration has made good on these promises. And, above all, it has created the sort of chaos in Iraq that is likely to fan the flames of resentment for generations to come.

This Day (Lagos, Nigeria)

Me Tarzan

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A BRASS-KNUCKLE brawl raging in Cebu City pits Mayor Tomas Osmeña against lawyers and broadcasters. The scrap shows that tensions, between 19th century municipal structures and new millennium issues, can turn incendiary overnight.

The mayor threatened to dump collected garbage at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Integrated Bar of the Philippines offices. Those "who support environmental laws make local governments pay a certain amount."

IBP Cebu earlier served notice of lodging a citizens' suit—for Solid Waste Management Act infractions—against four metro area sites: Cebu, Lapu-Lapu, Mactan and Talisay.

But the day was not yet over. GMA News 7 would be stripped of its business permit. Osmeña said, "You won't sell (City Hall) airtime? I'll close you."

The Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters ng Pilipinas had earlier blackballed delinquent clients, among them: a sardine firm, a show-biz group, for a time, sweepstakes. Seven TV and radio stations had collectibles worth P1.7 million for airtime City Hall used. The IOUs date back to the period 1998-2001.

KBP's settle-debts-first policies, Osmeña asserted, violated freedom of the press. They extort "money from the city government by imposing censorship."

That dySS' Bobby Nalzaro, this year's "Golden Dove" awardee, hosts a program critical of "His Honor" was irrelevant. "I'll start with the biggest: GMA," the mayor said. "Everybody's afraid of media. I'm not."

A hefty dose of Prozac can do wonders for "Me Tarzan" chest-thumping. But governance by bile doesn't help cities confronted by exploding demands from growing numbers of indigents.

"Thinking small" is inadequate, the World Bank stresses in "Making Cities Livable." For the future, city officials must "think different."

"Since the 1950s, the dominant model for providing basic infrastructure and services has been government," the WB notes. "Cities need to turn away from an unsuccessful model that leaves the most dynamic providers of basic services outside delivery mechanisms."

Cities must instead reach out to the private sector. Local governments need to trim their sails, stop doles and serve in the modest—but more challenging—role of visionary.

The "quiet revolution in local governance" is the crafting of partnership-based models, the WB says. Advances will come from those who design policies to harness private sector resources and citizen participation.

Indeed, "the powerful desire of the poor to acquire and use assets to improve their well-being and reduce their vulnerability" can be the staunchest ally for urban reformers, the Asian Development Bank adds.

Cebu's compounding problems differ from most cities only in scale. Migrants double its population rate increase over that of other provinces. In the city itself, 41 out of every 100 kids are stunted by chronic hunger. Aquifers are "overdrawn" by 170,000 cubic meters daily, resulting in dry taps or brackish wells.

But some are unique—and stem from "Me Tarzan" decisions. Cebu's imploding yen-loans are the classic example.

Abetted by a cowed city council, Osmeña signed a P1.9-billion loan for the South Reclamation project. The dollar then fetched P26. Advise to share reclaimed land, instead of paying cash, was spurned. So was the suggestion to insure against currency fluctuations.

Serial devaluations sent the peso plummeting to P56:$1 today. And the debt went through the roof to P4.33 billion. City Hall doctors its books—using 1996 exchange rates—to reflect only P2.8 billion in IOUs, the Commission on Audit complained.

Cebu's total liabilities today tower over all 102 cities at P3.62 billion. (Cagayan de Oro is second at P934 million.) Those loans strap every man, woman and child, within city limits, with a debt burden of P60,654—compared to the P44,548 for 84 million Filipinos.

"Policy blacks holes" are seen in loan bills soaring, in 2007, to P970 million. That's half the city's annual budget, the Sun Star noted. There's no policy on water, peri-urban areas, land use, flood control, sewage, disaster preparedness, citizen participation and other critical concerns.

After a life-threatening illness, Osmeña retook the mayorship in June 2002. Cebu Daily News editorially welcomed his return saying:

"'The angel of death has many eyes' a Yiddish proverb notes. Osmeña looked into those eyes, as we all must one day, and walked away…(In the past), he blustered that 'there's nothing to fiscalize under my watch'…We hope this brush with our common mortality produced a new sense of reality and a more compassionate mayor."

But hopes for partnership-models have curdled with more "Me Tarzan" outbreaks since then.

His innovative plan for citizen participation in budgeting was ripped up. He ladled P32 million to 61 politically friendly barangays; the 18 that voted wrong were shut out. "They don't recognize me," he fumed. "I won't recognize them."

A P151-million bill from Toyo Construction would be paid only over his dead body, he declared. He backtracked—only to dip into Japanese loans to pay interest on Japanese loans. Flanked by bodyguards, pistol in hand, he snapped at a double-parked cabbie: "You challenge the mayor?" Me Tarzan. Arsenic Lacson would have guffawed to death.

The mayor lit into the lawyers and broadcasters this week. "He lost respect for us?" IBP president Democrito Barcenas asked. "Tell him: the feeling is mutual." Me Tarzan also.

* * *

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Carless

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SAW my friend Jack Yabut on ANC last Monday. He was plugging for the World Carless Day, which is tomorrow. Like Earth Day and No Smoking Day, World Carless Day means to draw attention to a bane, in this case smog and traffic caused by motor vehicles, and to find ways to lessen it.

Jack himself had several suggestions—organizing car pools, taking public transport (chief of them the MRT and LRT), biking, and walking to the office or home if they are not too far off. The trick is to take things one step at a time, he said, but to do them with some regularity. Maybe you can take public transport once a week, quite apart from your car-ban day. You do that regularly, it becomes a habit, and habits make for attitudinal changes.

Asked what inspired him to take up this crusade, Jack said that honestly it wasn't lofty heroism but plain self-interest. He wants to be able to breathe reasonably clean air, a fact that has become less and less possible in Metro Manila today.

His concern is not exaggerated. I myself have a graphic image of Metro Manila's pollution in my head. I was on an out-of-town trip one summer's day some years ago, and as usual I took the dawn flight. I do that because I can no longer tolerate traffic, it wastes my time and frays my nerves. The plane had just taken off and I could see gray light breaking in the east. Then to my surprise, I saw a line streaking across the horizon just above the sleeping city. Everything below it was dark as soot and everything above it was clear as sky. It took some moments for me to realize what that line was. It was where the smog began, or rose up to. It startled me to realize I lived in the very depths of that dark soot. I was glad I was leaving it, if only temporarily.

The biggest contributor there are, of course, the motor vehicles. And private cars—however more efficient their exhausts are compared to those of buses and jeepneys—are the main culprit. That is so because of their sheer inefficiency in ferrying one or two persons from Point A to Point B at any given time compared to buses and jeepneys and trains that haul a horde of bedraggled carcasses over the same time and space. Private cars are also easily the biggest contributor to traffic by the same token. Too much space, too few people.

I myself drive, but I feel no small pangs of conscience when I see tricycles and buses groaning with human cargo. I still get pissed off when the tricycles ply the main roads, holding up traffic for the faster vehicles, and the buses block my path, particularly in the part of SM that leads out to Edsa (a simple problem the half dozen or so traffic aides there can't seem to solve); but the recognition I am lugging my sole carcass over some distance while they are doing so hundreds of them gives me pause.

I do take the MRT, as I've said in an earlier column, going to Makati, at least on the occasions I am persuaded to go there. It is not my favorite part of the metropolis; Manila is, for reasons that have nothing to do with Atienza. It is not merely that I manage to escape the huge parking lot known as Edsa—one of the joys of taking the MRT is looking down at all the cars not moving below and knowing you are not there—it is that I manage to escape the cares of finding a place to park in the huge non-parking lot known as Makati. Jack is right: sometimes, enlightened self-interest does the trick.

I know the arguments that have been raised against public transport. Mainly, that it sucks. It is crowded, it is slow and it is a pickpocket's or holdupper's paradise. The argument is not without merit, although, like the issue of leaving the country and working abroad, it is a chicken-and-egg tangle. The solution is itself the problem. We leave the country, the country gets worse, others find more reason to leave it. We buy more and more cars, public transport is left to the dogs or the poor, we buy more and more cars. And kill ourselves—and our children—with lung problems.

Or cancer: Haven't you noticed that's been on the rise over the years? But that's another story.

Clearly, government must do its job of improving public transport. Chief of them by running more trains. Omar Lopez had an interesting letter the other day (PDI, 9/21/04) saying we are the only country on earth that doesn't have a decent train system and enumerating the many merits of having one. Chief of them making travel easier to and from the provinces, thereby decongesting Metro Manila.

I've said the same thing a number of times. The problem isn't the demonstrable lack of merit of trains, it is the demonstrable lack of will of government. The one thing that stands formidably in its way is the car lobby, which includes the sellers of cars, gasoline, tires and other car-related products as well as the public officials, elective or appointive, who corner funds with which to build substandard, or even non-existent, roads and bridges.

Government must do its job, but we have to do ours, too. Cars aren't just a means of transport in this country, they are a state of mind. They carry with them a culture—a "car culture"—that has our urban dwellers agog over Ford's invention. Jack is right, too about taking things one step at a time. Literally, in the case of walking. That is something by the way you learn when you visit Europe and other countries: though their dwellers live far more luxuriously than we do, they have not forgotten how to walk. Their own car culture has not wrecked their walking culture. A fellow Filipino once complained to me in one such sojourn: "Don't they ever think of having tricycles here?" No, my dear, they don't. Which is why they live far more luxuriously than we do.

Carless is not the end of the world. It's just the start of it.

Unfair

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

EARLIER, I reported the observation of Philippine Coconut Authority administrator Danilo Coronacion and former PCA chair Jose Romero that the coconut industry stands on the threshold of a research breakthrough that could unleash the coconut's potentials. In the field of medicine, the monolaurin found in the lowly coconut could be crucial in strengthening our immune system. For alternative fuel, the thrust to develop coco-diesel looks very promising. Coronacion cited the case of National Basketball Association star player Magic Johnson, an AIDS victim whose condition has reportedly improved with a regimen that includes lauric acid taken from the coconut.

* * *

The two also opined that if the local coconut industry is to capitalize on this breakthrough, it has to be revitalized. A massive campaign to replace aging coconut trees should be immediately launched. Luckily, House representatives from the 68 coconut-producing provinces are reportedly set to petition the government to help the 15 million Filipinos who are dependent on this industry. They are eyeing the release of some P1.5 billion in dividends (for 2003 and first semester of 2004) locked up in the sequestered 27 percent San Miguel Corp. shares, said to have been purchased with coco levy funds collected from the farmers in the '70s. The funds now amount to P150 billion.

The lawmakers are right in asking for the release of the coco levy dividends. They owe it to their constituents, who are among the poorest in the agricultural sector, to get the coconut industry ready for the exciting prospects. It's encouraging to hear that, last July 8, the Cabinet decided to look into how coco farmers could benefit from the funds.

* * *

Long before former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr. announced it, people were already expressing dismay at rumors that he had been appointed as chair of the Public Estates Authority. Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz perhaps understated things when he opined that a number of appointments are "difficult to understand." The appointment of an El Shaddai spokesperson as administrator of the Light Rail Transit Authority is another one that is hard to justify. "Eez a puzzlement," to borrow the words of the King of Siam in a Broadway play.

* * *

Revilla Sr. is 77 years old. Despite his assurance that he is in "peak condition," there are many others far healthier in mind and body. His record as senator for 12 years was uneventful. The Senate media cannot recall a time they heard him express an opinion except once, during the Erap impeachment, when he pointed out just how heavy a wad of bills is. And all through the congressional canvass last June, which I covered assiduously, I never heard Revilla's voice even once. What puzzles people is why the President has to accommodate him when she had vowed that in her "second wind," she would be "non-political." Revilla's son has already "inherited" the Senate's public works committee.

* * *

The Palace was quoted as saying that Jose Gangan, president of PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corp., and Rufino Bomasang, president of PNOC-Exploration Corp., "resigned" their posts and GMA accepted their resignations. The more accurate way of stating it is that the two technocrats were not "re-nominated" by GMA. That is entirely her prerogative. Reports also say they wanted to return to the private sector.

But clearly a disinformation was a report heard on radio, attributed to a Palace official, that the two PNOC executives' "resignations" were accepted because they refused to take a cut in their high salaries. That's grossly unfair to Gangan and Bomasang. Gangan and Bomasang are personal friends of mine. I know they would have agreed readily to a pay cut, except that they were not reappointed. Accusing them of refusing to take a pay cut was most unjust especially because they served government well for a long time. Bomasang, a mining engineer who graduated from the University of the Philippines cum laude, and a board topnotcher, is often referred to as "Mr. Energy," having served no less than five presidents. The Malaya editorial yesterday rightly referred to him as a "national treasure." Lawyer-accountant Gangan, a Harvard graduate, holds the distinction of being the youngest ever to be accredited certified public accountant (at age 17). Those are two fine officials.

* * *

Carissa P. Cruz is a most upset young lady. Attacks have come her way that she got her position as assistant secretary in the Department of Trade and Industry because her mom is the high-powered Gina de Venecia and her stepfather is the Speaker. That is very unfair, as she is highly qualified.

An Ateneo graduate, she started out with Citem under the dynamic directress Eli Pinto Mansor. Carissa won a partial Boston University scholarship from Time Warner where she finished her MBA and was honored the student leadership award. She then worked with the San Francisco office of the investment firm Morgan Stanley, then with Asia Star Ventures in Palo Alto, where she helped out in deal generation and international business matching development between the United States and Asia.

It was very tempting for Carissa to stay abroad and work there, but as she told me, "I wanted to come home and serve here." Working under Trade Undersecretary Nelly Favis-Villafuerte, Carissa helps out in the operations group which is in charge of projects in the regions, such as port facilities, and looks into export possibilities.

I advised Carissa to just ignore the few critics and learn to deal with the intrigues that many of us have for *merienda*.

VP Noli responds to 'riles'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

VERY welcome is the letter to this column from Vice President Noli de Castro in response to our concern for the poor families living along railroad tracks. Tens of thousands of them will have to go when the construction of the modern railway system (the North Rail) starts in a couple of months. The railway project is part of the Strong Republic Transit System, a flagship project of the Arroyo administration.

De Castro's letter is welcome because it would be a gauge for those in the Bantay Riles (non-government and people's organizations) in monitoring how the government handles the human side of this project.

Sure, we all need new ways of doing things and the long-awaited transit system is welcome, but we also need to preserve the dignity of human beings, the poor most especially, who live dangerously along the tracks.

As to the big illegal structures built along the way by the non-poor who wanted to free-load, bulldoze them tomorrow.

Note that De Castro does not use the word "squatters." He uses the word "settlers."

"Thank you very much for your concern over the plight of 'riles' settlers who will be affected by the railway rehabilitation project, which you wrote about in your Sept. 9 column, 'Bantay Riles.'

"As Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) I would like to give you some background information and updates on the resettlement of the 'riles' settlers.

"While actual work for the North Rail project is yet to begin, the difficult task of relocating the 'tens of thousands of families along the railroad tracks' as you put it, has already commenced as early as last year according to the resettlement plan which HUDCC helped to prepare.

"In fact we have completed the clearing of the Right of Way (ROW) along the Kalookan alignment of North Rail which involved the relocation of 626 informal settler families who either opted to resettle at the Towerville housing project in San Jose, Del Monte or availed of the 'Balik-Probinsya' program, with an assistance package worth P15,000 for transportation, as well as food vouchers.

"From 2002 to March 2004, seven consultations have been held in Kalookan alone which were convened by HUDCC, NHA, an attached agency of HUDCC, and participated in by the concerned agencies including Philippine National Railways, North Luzon Railway Corporation-Bases Conversion Development Authority, National Anti-Poverty Commission, Philippine Commission on the Urban Poor, Commission on Human Rights, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Education, and the Department of Health, as well as NGOs such as the Urban Poor Associates.

"In all these consultations, the concerned families and communities were fully informed of their relocation options. We also made it clear that the resettlement program will be beneficiary-led and in-city, to the extent allowed by the budget. This is to minimize the adverse effects of dislocation among the affected families.

The resettlement program likewise provides for an assistance package amounting to P201,970.00 per family. This amount covers serviced home lots, housing materials loan, livelihood assistance, water/power connections as well as food allowance. As indicated earlier, we are also offering the *Balik Probinsya* program to families who will opt to go back to their provinces.

"We are now prioritizing the clearing of the ROW for the Malabon alignment which will connect to the Kalookan segment. This will affect 3,399 families, of which 400 have already expressed their desire to vacate the area voluntarily.

"While the HUDCC-NHA has already held previous consultations with communities who will be affected by future clearing and relocation operations in the Malabon area, local inter-agency committee (LIAC) meetings are continuously being convened every two weeks by the local government of Malabon. These meetings are participated in by various agencies such as the PCUP, DOTC, NAPC, HUDCC-NHA, and representatives of various people's organizations.

"Meanwhile, parallel consultations are also being undertaken weekly by the HUDCC-NHA and PCUP with the affected residents. We would like to invite you to attend these consultations to observe how they are conducted and to give you a better idea of the issues and concerns of the various sectors involved.

"As to the funding aspect, the resettlement program for both North and South Rail settlers will require an estimated P8 billion. HUDCC is now in the final stage of contracting a loan from the National Development Company amounting to P3.5 billion. This will be sourced from a planned flotation of NDC bonds.

"The Department of Budget and Management, on the other hand, committed to immediately release P100 million to NHA, and another P150 million within the month for the project. This will be used to start the relocation along the Malabon alignment by the end of this month.

"Much of the work still lies ahead of us, and we remain firm in our commitment to protect the welfare of the families to be relocated.

"As the new HUDCC chairman, I bring to this position my long-time personal and professional experience in dealing with and serving the Filipino masses. Thus, I can personally guarantee you that I will exert every effort to make sure that the families living along the railways will not have to 'go through a worst phase' in the course of giving them a better life away from the dangers and the poor living conditions which they have had to bear with for a long time.

"Thank you very much.
"Sincerely yours,
Vice President Noli de Castro."

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Macapagal the First

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

ONE of the ironies of our history is that Ferdinand Marcos died on Sept. 28, the birthday of Diosdado Macapagal. Macapagal "the incorruptible," as his campaign biography called him, had the distinction of being the first—and so far, the only—genuinely poor man to have made it to Malacañang, which is why he bore with pride the corny epithet "the poor boy from Lubao." He was undeniably one of our brightest leaders, the only one able to complete his political memoirs, and who left behind several books as a testament to his beliefs and policies. He was an honest man, personally and not just financially, a distinction all the more greater because it stood out in stark contrast to his successor and political nemesis. He was in many ways an exemplar of his generation of politicians, who played the game to win, but not to the extent of robbing the country blind in the interest of his family.

This is not to say that his administration was not touched by scandal—for it was, and he would eventually go down to defeat on the issue of graft and corruption. But like so many of his predecessors, the corruption in his administration could be traced to the people around him, to his being too kind to his supporters and too tolerant of those who enriched themselves in office. But as for himself, and his family, no one could say that they were corrupt. His presidency, too, was characterized by austerity: simple dishes, but well cooked; a minimum number of courses; but everything served with flair and style on state china, showing that presidential dignity could be maintained without the pompous trappings that reached grotesque proportions during the time of his immediate successor. It should be remembered that when he became the new tenant of Malacañang, he found the Palace in an advanced state of decrepitude; but instead of embarking on a fabulously expensive project of reconstruction (as would happen under martial law), he authorized his wife to engage in a general spring cleaning and redecoration, and with little cost to the taxpayer.

He was a famous campaigner, reaching almost every corner of our archipelago in his attempt to glad-hand as many voters as possible: no candidate before or since has matched his record in this regard. Of the occupants of the Palace, only a colonial governor, Leonard Wood, personally visited so many parts of the country. He was not the most charismatic of leaders, nor the most politically adept, but he was genuine in his high regard for the common man, and did his best to alleviate his condition. He was responsible for the only genuine land reform program in our history, which, like his other populist programs, cost him dearly politically.

Had he chosen to forego the limelight after he was president, he would have enjoyed a reputation which would have gained in luster as the years went by; so great was the contrast between his personal probity and that of the man who replaced him. But in a conscious effort to secure one more distinction in history—for he was a man very conscious of history and the place he wanted to have in it—he ran for, and became, the second president of the Constitutional Convention, replacing the deceased Carlos P. Garcia. It would be his position as president of that convention which would reduce his standing in the eyes of many people and gain for him a more ambivalent place in the memory of his people.

Macapagal once said that "The Constitution is a temple in which free citizens worship not the pagan god of despotism but the divinity of liberty." But when the era of despotism arrived, he proved remarkably timid in the face of Marcos' apostasy to democracy. Macapagal did little, if anything, to resist the transformation of the Con-con to a rubber stamp assembly for the legitimization of martial law; something the oppositionist delegates never forgot, and which served to make hollow his subsequent attempts to apply for political asylum at the US Embassy, and his effort to convene a rump assembly in the late '70s to nullify the Marcos Constitution. This part of his life was the supreme opportunity to become a hero—and instead, as the famous saying goes, he missed the bus.

After the fall of the dictatorship, he did get to enjoy being honored as an elder statesman and former president. Of all our presidents, he worked the longest under the greatest number of presidents: a president's president, so to speak. His influence on our national psyche, is, to my mind, still unmeasured, but will be—when stock is properly taken—seen to be profound. His decision to declare the Revolution of 1896 "unfinished," and his policy of setting aside our July 4 independence day in favor of June 12 (itself a good move), while simultaneously junking a sense of appreciation of the movement that achieved our modern independence (itself a terrible move which only made the Filipino identity crisis worse), had great consequences.

Macapagal tried to make history but was overtaken by it. No greater proof of this can be found than the way his very name is written. Always, in his public and private documents, he was "Diosdado Macapagal," the name with which he signed his oath of office and all documents of state. But today, to an increasing number of ignorant people, under the auspices of an increasingly ignorant official apparatus, he is "Diosdado P. Macapagal." Why? Because Ferdinand E. Marcos decreed it would be he who would decide on the name of his predecessors. Even if they were, like Macapagal, still alive.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Panic attack

YOUNG BLOOD

Tito Lyndon C. Llemos

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THE PAST days have been quite tense in our office. There has been so much concern among the staff over the current state of our lives. Debates have raged over what we should do to bring about change.

There are seven of us in our unit—six males and our boss who is the only female. Only three of us are unmarried. Our average age is 25 and we are starting to wonder about our chances of making it big one day. Big for us means having our own house, buying a car and being able to send our kids to a good school. Throw in a small farm, and it would be nirvana.

Given our country's current state of affairs, it seems inconceivable that we would be able to go very far in our chosen careers. Working in the government means a lot of hard work. It's like being sent to boot camp for 30 years. And now, with the price of crude oil increasing frequently, pulling along the prices of basic commodities, I see a bleak future for me.

The Filipino people are being battered relentlessly. Gravity seems to have a double standard. Prices go up and never go down, while salaries remain bound to the ground. I dread watching TV in the morning lest I hear that fares have been increased again and I won't be able to pay for a ride.

I'm sick of eating noodles and canned goods. My guts crave real food. But my financial status has followed our country's financial condition. In other words, my finances are a shambles.

Is there a future for me? None of my friends can give me a sensible answer.

To add to the feeling of hopelessness, it seems like the clouds are here to stay for quite a while. It looks like we are in for a rough ride in the next two years, as economists from the University of the Philippines have warned. It doesn't sound like things will get better soon. I am just keeping my fingers crossed and praying we don't turn into another Argentina or take ourselves back into the Middle Ages.

In the face of such doomsday economics, my immediate concerns are: What options do I have? Is it time to change careers? What career would that be? Was I right in choosing Political Science as my undergraduate course? Maybe once I dreamed of being a hotshot lawyer connected with a big Makati firm. But look at me now: I haven't even gone to law school after graduating five years ago. And last year, I saw that ambition being flushed down the drain. Rising tuition and book prices forced me to put on hold the dream of adding a title to my proper name.

Still every time I get this panic attack, I comfort myself with the thought that only seven out of every 100 Filipinos graduate from college, of which only one percent comes from families living below the poverty line. If memory serves me right, around three or four million Filipinos are jobless. So, the majority of our country's population is worse off than me. What right do I have to be complaining?

But then I wonder how the people of Payatas or Smokey Mountain take news of this kind. Or, do they even care? The danger is if they have accepted their fate in complete surrender, if they have reached the point when they believe they are beyond salvation.

My guiding principle as well as my ultimate goal in life was: work hard, save hard, retire early and buy a farm. From the looks of it, I will never be able to buy a garden on a government worker's pay check. A farm? I don't think I will be able to afford one, at least not in this millennium.

Most of my contemporaries in our province are already raising families of their own. It appears only logical that I would soon follow suit. But when I see the hardship of life painted on the faces of the clients we serve at the Department of Social Welfare and Development, I reckon that perpetual bachelorhood is the better option.

I am afraid I won't be able to provide a quality life for my wife and children. The definition of quality life is changed every now and then by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), but what doesn't change is its tendency to become more and more expensive.

So, what do I do now? Do I pack my things and head home? Do I have a fighting chance of making my life a success? Ask a cigarette vendor on Edsa, or a newspaper boy in Cubao, or a sampaguita vendor in Kamuning, a friend of mine once suggested. Can we say ours is the better life?

Conrado de Quiros said it is all a matter of pursuing what we think is the passion of our hearts. The pursuit of happiness, living itself, is seldom a smooth journey. It is bound to dull our hopes, bludgeon our dreams and wear us down. But so long as it doesn't tear us apart, we have a chance.

Enough of this! It is time to get moving. Musing and worrying about these things will not bring me any closer to my dreams.

Tito Lyndon C. Llemos, 27, works with the Department of Social Welfare and Development as a project development officer. He is currently taking his master's in public administration at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

THEY SAID

Elusive dream

"I still dream of justice after all these years."

—Seventy-year-old Faustina Valeriano, whose husband and son were gunned down by a team of soldiers and militiamen in 1987

Hi-octane management

"I had to cover a big area because I was a hands-on manager who followed up to ensure that projects are completed."

—Presidential aide Luis Lorenzo, defending his use of government money for jet fuel worth P2.5 million when he was still agriculture secretary

Early vote

"There's too many young people dying. I know where my vote's going."

—Anderson Nesbitt (no fan of President George W. Bush) who recently got his US citizenship after leaving his tiny Caribbean nation in 1990

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Robot economists

FINANCE Secretary Juanita Amatong has announced that the government would offer a "final, final" tax amnesty to "tax evaders and tax cheats." Meanwhile, President Macapagal-Arroyo was reported as reminding regularly the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs to "punish" tax evaders. Other reports noted that, in the last 13 years, the government had given amnesties 15 times to tax cheats.

So, how in heaven's name can the government expect rich taxpayers to pay their taxes correctly if it gives tax amnesties to tax evaders? Even those who outright cheated the government of taxes, as those involved in the P1.3 billion tax credit scam, are getting off scot-free?

And yet, University of the Philippines and other government economists are proposing additional taxes that would impact mostly on the poor who can't escape taxes. Like the tax on text messaging, disguised as a franchise tax or windfall tax or telecommunications profit, which in fact is a service tax to be imposed on all users of text messaging.

Like the 10-percent Value Added Tax, which every consumer pays every time he makes a purchase. Now the UP economists want the VAT to be raised 12 percent, even though only 3 percent of the tax is actually remitted to the government. The 7 percent goes to businessmen who pocket the taxes after paying part of them to BIR examiners to keep them mum. And what about the proposed additional tax on oil products despite their unprecedented high prices?

What the government and the UP economists lack is imagination and common sense. They are robots doing exactly what they have been trained to, do—act according to the buttons pushed by their foreign masters, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

What has our country come to?

—**LILY PAMAOS,**
Toril, Davao City,
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PHILIPPINE LETTERS DAILY INQUIRER

Fencing off railways

IN CONNECTION with Ceres P. Doyo's column "Bantay riles," (PDI, 9/09/04) I suggest the putting up of concrete fences on both sides of the railway system—at least about 10 feet high. The enclosed portion (including the rails) should be declared off-limits; if trespassed, the violators should be penalized. This will solve the problem of squatting on railways and I think the squatters will be grateful.

Considering that the squatter areas concerned are found only in some concentrated places, the fences will not cost as much as the alternatives: uprooting the squatters (political, social, economic and moral repercussions, etc.) or keeping the status quo which, for obvious reasons, is not really that attractive.

—**GADDIE B. MAALA,**
Marikina City,
gaddie_maala@yahoo.com

Win-win solution for Winner, Atienza

THE CONTROVERSY over the lot at Arroceros Street, Manila, which was purchased from the Department of Education by the city of Manila out of the Special Education Fund, remains a nagging issue.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, the administrators, teachers and other school personnel would like to construct on that lot a division office that is nature friendly. According to them, the building will be put up without cutting down trees.

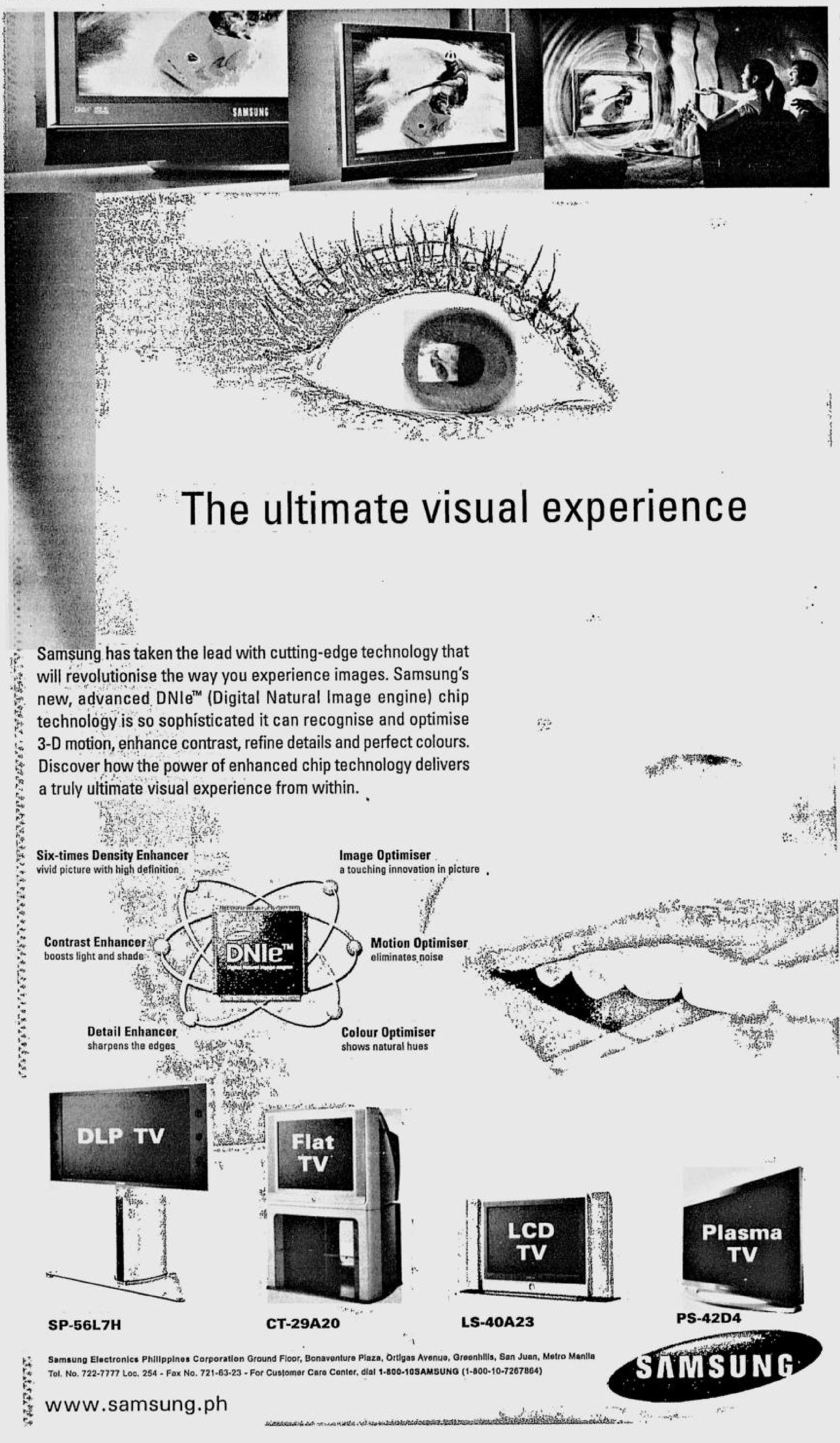
On the other hand, the Winner Foundation opposes the construction of the office building for fear that it will destroy Manila's only forested park which serves to filter pollution. Its members are afraid that century-old trees will be felled.

Both sides stand pat on their respective positions. The debates on the issue have become emotional and clouded and are leading nowhere but to a "nobody wins" situation.

The Manila Association of Public Secondary School Administrators (MAPSSA) believes there is a win-win solution to this issue. Mayor Atienza's objectives and the opposers can still be served well through a solution that will lead to the realization of our vision of a development-oriented Manila. Simply put, the mayor and the opposers can sit together to thresh out their differences. This has never been done since day one. Whatever points were raised for or against the problem were done through press releases, rallies and counter-rallies, and the like. Not surprisingly, soon enough, the issue had become muddled. It could no longer be determined who said what and what was said and why.

MAPSSA recommends the holding of a dialogue wherein the mayor, opposers and all stakeholders are present to decide on the issue once and for all. Mayor Atienza, through his "Buhayin ang Maynila" movement, envisions a Manila that is green and nature-friendly like a forest park. This, the Winner Foundation will see and feel if only it talks face to face with him.

—**ROMEO B. SANTOS,**
president, Manila Association of Public Secondary School Administrators,
and principal, Torres High School



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Grateful to RP press

WHEN I filed a libel suit against a newspaper and two of its columnists, I frankly did not think that my complaint would merit more than routine notice in our press. My query to the Philippine Press Council whether "there is in our press community a corner or sanctuary to which one can repair for vindication or relief" was more despairing than hopeful. I did not believe the council would sanction one of its own.

The PCC found itself divided on the issue and could not act. But then something unexpected happened. A segment of our press community—composed of council members, columnists, journalists and media watchdogs—saw my case as no ordinary libel complaint, but as a landmark action with grave implications for the press itself.

From their writings, this is what we find:

1. On the right of reply to a news subject, there is wide-ranging consensus that it must be accorded by the offending publication. Some warned that our press must adopt the right of reply as policy and practice because the alternative is to make it a statutory right, which is the case in Germany, Brazil, South Africa and other countries.

2. On the limits of fair comment, several columnists challenged the widely held belief among newspaper columnists that they are not required to back their opinion with facts. One columnist opined, "Opinion without visible means of support is journalistic vagrancy."

3. On the abuse of press freedom, one columnist noted: "The Romulo case mirrors cases ... where practitioners abuse citizens for various, often personal, partisan and narrow motives."

4. On ethics and values in journalism, there was considerable agreement that the press as an institution must jealously guard its own code of ethics. Otherwise it would just be "an institutional fraternity that is no better than Congress, the military and the police, incapable of making its members toe the line or conform with its own rules."

My complaint also triggered the discussion of related issues. When the Makati Business Club raised an eyebrow about the spectacle of a public relations practitioner doubling as a columnist, the personage alluded to replied lamely that he was just exercising his constitutional right to express his opinion. One columnist remarked that this would have been "unthinkable" for the giants who laid the foundations of Philippine journalism.

It is true that in order to answer the attacks against me, I had to repeat all the original slurs against me. Yet by taking action against the campaign of vilification against me and raising it to the attention of press watchdogs, my plight and concerns have received serious attention. More importantly, the press has started a debate about where its values truly lie.

It is more than one victim of abusive journalism could legitimately hope for. And for this, I am forever indebted to the Philippine press.

—**ROBERTO R. ROMULO**

Forgotten, flood-prone Sampaloc district?

I WISH to call the attention of the offices and authorities concerned to the need for a better drainage system along the whole stretch of Maceda Street, Sampaloc, Manila.

Recently, Windsor Inn had several guests from Europe, North America and Asia who could not even go on a sight-seeing tour near our area because of the flooded surrounding streets. Needless to say, they were disappointed and don't want to come back to the Philippines because of their bad experience.

Why is the government neglecting this area of Sampaloc, a historic part of Manila, where thousands of students come and go day after day? This is near Dangwa, the country's biggest fresh flower market and the *lechon* capital of the metropolis.

Why is it that the fancy places where our politicians reside like Ayala Alabang and the posh sections of Makati and Quezon City are not flooded?

It is already the 21st century, we do not expect modern subways or great highways in our metropolis, but please let's solve the perennial problem of flooding in Sampaloc.

—**JANET CACHO,**
supervisor, Windsor Inn,
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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Floreño G. Solmirano**

Planned hotel on tiny sandbar opposed

SNAKE Island: Tourism vs ecology.

JOFELLE P. TESORIO

By Jofelle P. Tesorio
Puerto Princesa City

MYRNA Rosco, a small-framed woman from a fishing community, stood defiantly in front of environment officials and several businessmen to prove her point that a hotel should not be constructed on a fragile sandbar off Puerto Princesa City.

Rosco, president of the Honda Bay Boatmen Association Inc. (Hobbai) and member of the

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Divino Rostro: The other icon in Peñafrancia festival

By Alan Pelayo
Naga City

THE GRANDEST Marian festival in the country originally drew its vitality from the unique Bicolano piety which centers on the devotion to the Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia (Our Lady of Peñafrancia).

But for some 200 years since the devotion was started in 1690, religiosity has been overwhelmed by a spiritual matriarchy, with the more virile, masculine figure of spiritual power receding into the background.

In his paper, Bicolano historian Danilo M. Gerona said tales of miraculous healings and rescue from accidents, calamities and other injurious circumstances were attributed to the intercession of the Virgin of Peñafrancia.

"But events in the late nineteenth century Kabikolan opened a new devotional path for the Bikolanos which further added color and solemnity to the feast with the devotion to the Divino Rostro," he said.

Gerona, a specialist in the history of the early Spanish colonial years in Bicol, noted that accounts of the Peñafrancia procession never mentioned what was now regarded as the other important icon, the image of the Divino Rostro (Spanish for "Holy Face"), which became a feature of the event during the last few years of the Spanish regime.

Father de la Torre

Its devotion to the Bikolanos, according to Gerona, was introduced by a Spanish secular priest assigned in Nueva Caceres (now Naga City), Licenciado Don Pedro de la Torre y del Pozo, who became famous in Bicol history as Fr. Pedro de la Torre.

"Fr. Pedro de la Torre was the provisor of the diocese during the incumbency of Bishop (Casimiro) Herrero. He was from the town of Osa de la Vega in the Diocese of Cuenca in Spain, the place where this devotion originated," said the former seminarian-historian.

He said the chapel of the parish of Osa de la Vega was one of the most significant pilgrimage sites in the Diocese of Cuenca because of a copy of the handkerchief of St. Veronica, on which the image of the Holy Face was supposedly imprinted. The original was believed to have been deposited as an invaluable sacred relic in Rome, he said.

"This image in Osa de la Vega was inherited by Isabel del Corral Matilla, wife of Gregorio de la Torre, from her priest-cousin named Don Juan Matilla. It is not known, however, whether Fr. Pedro de la Torre was in any way related to Gregorio de la Torre," he added.

Deep reverence

Gerona said the inhabitants' profound reverence showed the importance they attached to this image. A curtain was placed in front of its altar and could not be lifted by anyone, except priests who must don the prescribed sacerdotal garb, such as the sobrepelliz and the stole, and only after having lighted two candles on the altar, he said.

Anyone who opened the curtain without the prescribed ritual faced excommunication, he said.

"The image caused enormous wonder when it was reported as having perspired blood and water three times in the presence of a crowd. Many of them who allegedly witnessed these miracles executed formal testimonies. It was even said that some material evidence were preserved and these were kept in the sacristy of the chapel where the bishop used to bless the crowd whenever he made his Episcopal visitation to his parish," Gerona said.

Priests' vow

Many miracles were attributed to the image, but the inhabitants regarded as the greatest when the town was spared from the ravages of a series of cholera morbo epidemic that struck the town in 1834, 1854, 1855 and 1865, he said.

Remarkably, they claimed, nobody was afflicted even as the other towns suffered enormous numbers of casualties, said Gerona.

"Since then, the fame of this miraculous image spread, and one of those who have developed a strong devotion to the image was Don Pedro de la Torre," he said.

Upon Don Pedro's assignment to the Diocese of Caceres, Gerona said, a copy was made for the Cathedral of Nueva Caceres from the picture that he possessed from the image in Cuenca.

In the morning of Aug. 26, 1882, upon hearing the news that the cholera morbo had already reached Manila, Bishop Herrero, in his desire to seek divine assistance in sparing the city from this dreaded epidemic, ordered that the image of Peñafrancia be brought to the cathedral, Gerona said.

"The order was promptly complied with that same morning. But the provisor, Father De la Torre, who fervently wished to promote the devotion to the image, asked the bishop to include the Divino Rostro which was also placed on the altar of the cathedral," he said.

When the epidemic reached Nueva Caceres, Gerona said the priests made a vow that if it subsided, its feast day, the Sunday after the birth of Mary, would be regularly celebrated in the diocese. This covenant was written on a *sello tercero* signed by the clergy and by the bishop and placed on the image, he said.

"It was said that God heard the petition of the priests and the epidemic quickly subsided," he said.

Covenant papers

Complying with the vow, Gerona said, a procession was held from the patio of the cathedral during the feast day, with the signatories bearing the image on their shoulders. He said the covenant papers, together with the collected alms, were sent to Osa de la Vega.

When the image of the Peñafrancia was brought back to the shrine in the barrio of Francia on Sept. 29, the Holy Face was also brought along, he said.

The image, which was 61 centimeters high and 47 cm wide, that was framed by Marco Dorado had already been donated and was placed in the altar of the shrine, according to Gerona.

Every Friday, a novena was held in its honor, while the Sunday after the birth of Mary was celebrated as its feast day simultaneously with that in Osa de la Vega.

Since then, Gerona said, the image of the Divino Rostro had become the other main feature of the Peñafrancia festivities.

Planned hotel . . .

From page A17

City Tourism Council (CTC), has been among those opposing the application of Ana Marie Asis and Juan Miguel Lagdameo for a special permit to construct a "world-class" resort hotel on Snake Island.

The tiny sandbar lies in the middle of the Honda Bay, along with several islands, including Arreceffi, where the Dos Palmas Arreceffi Island Resort is situated.

Rosco was among those who spoke in behalf of her community during a public hearing conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Sept. 8 on the issuance of a Special Land Use Permit (SLUP) to build a resort on the island. Asis and Lagdameo, both Manila-based businessmen, applied for the permit on May 10.

Rosco said the privatization of the island would greatly affect them since their livelihood depended on tourists visiting Honda Bay, particularly Snake.

She read a letter from the DENR denying the CTC's request last year to become a partner of the agency to protect, clean and conserve the island. The department then reasoned that it had a plan to proclaim the island a seascape and landscape protected area with maximum interest for all stakeholders.

"In effect, you are abandoning your plan to make this island a protected area because of the proposal of these businessmen," Rosco said in Filipino.

Like the way it is

She stressed that even tourists who came to the island didn't want to convert it into a resort. "We like it the way it is, without buildings because when you start putting structures, it will be like other resorts," she quoted the guests as saying.

Snake is the only remaining public island in the city where tourists and local residents can bask in the sun, swim, snorkel and feed fish for free. Its surrounding coral reefs serve as breeding ground for small fish.

The island shelters fishermen during windy and rainy days. It also serves as a natural tide-breaker in Honda Bay.

During the public hearing, a master plan to put up a Mediterranean style one-story hotel and a swimming pool on the island was presented by representatives of Lagdameo and Asis—Juliana Urquia and Warren Shaw, and their lawyer, Thomas Miguel Timbancaya.

Shaw said the building would comply with DENR specifications and other environmental standards.

Urquia, one of the designers, added that buildings on stilts would be put up and the existing mangroves would be preserved.

Waste disposal

Five septic tanks will contain waste from the buildings, she said. "Before the waste from the septic tanks goes out to the water, it will be clean and safe," she said, adding that they would see to it that they would comply with the requirements.

"We don't want another Boracay," said Cleofe Bernardino, executive director of the Palawan NGO Networks Inc. (PNNI).

In its position paper, the PNNI, along with the Haribon Foundation and the Environmental Legal Assistance Center, noted that Snake was believed to be an oceanic formation and geologically young, which meant that the ecosystem of the island was very fragile.

Any development plans should conform with the island's ecosystem, as well as its carrying capacity, the groups said. In fact, they argued, Snake could not be considered an island at all because it was very thin and had no considerable land mass. Only about 400 square meters of sand were not submerged during high tide.

Officials of the DENR-4B (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan) and the proponents said the environmental consultants would take care of the mitigating measures as far as marine life was concerned. The buildings, they said, would be constructed in such a way as that they would not adversely affect the environment.

The critics noted that under Proclamation No. 219, which was issued on July 2, 1967, the whole of Palawan was declared a national reserve closed to exploitation.

Its status as a game refuge and bird sanctuary was clarified through an endorsement from the Office of the President on Feb. 9, 1970, which said that "all area of less than 50,000 hectares should fall within the prohibition of Proclamation 219."

Palawan, not Snake

With its small size, Snake Island falls under this category, but the DENR and the proponents argued that the proclamation covers the whole province and was not specific to the island.

Although under Philippine law, islands should not be titled because they are public and state-owned, real property records in the neighboring Barangay Manalo showed that Asis owned two islands in Honda Bay. Other islands, such as Cowrie, Arreceffi, Pandan, Meara Marina and Starfish, are already owned by some individuals or companies by virtue of SLUPs and other tenurial instruments.

Under Proclamation No. 2152, which declared that, as a mangrove and wildlife habitat, the entire province, mangrove forest and Snake Island must be withdrawn from entry, sale, settlement and other forms and disposition.

The DENR and the proponents said the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan, a special law created for the environmental zoning of the province, would determine the best uses of Honda Bay.

But the NGOs said it was also the DENR that issued Administrative Order No. 8 in 1987, which stated that "pursuant to Forestry Law and Proclamation 2152, the application for licenses, leases or permits of any kind involving mangrove swamp forest reserves, whether such applications are new, renewal or extension, shall not be entertained and/or processed."

Hagedorn

Mayor Edward Hagedorn said the construction of a hotel on the island would attract more tourists. He did not pose any objection to the project "as long as it conforms to environmental standards."

"For the protection of the environment, we have sacrificed so many industries already," Hagedorn said. Because the national government is cash-strapped, the local government should make its own money and the Snake project is one solution, he said.

"If the violation is not so gross, we should not be too strict," Hagedorn said, arguing that tourism was the city's only source of income.

Opponents, however, said they were not totally against any tourism-related development of the city since it was being promoted as a tourist destination. They said they did not agree with the location of the proposed hotel because the island, they pointed out, was very delicate and not capable of holding the structures and activities.

Rep. Abraham Mitra, chair of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, said he did not want a hotel on the island for environmental and personal reasons.

As a young boy, he said his father, the late former Speaker Ramon V. Mitra, used to bring him to the island and it had a special place in his heart. If the majority of residents and stakeholders are against it, he will likely move for the disapproval of the project, he said.

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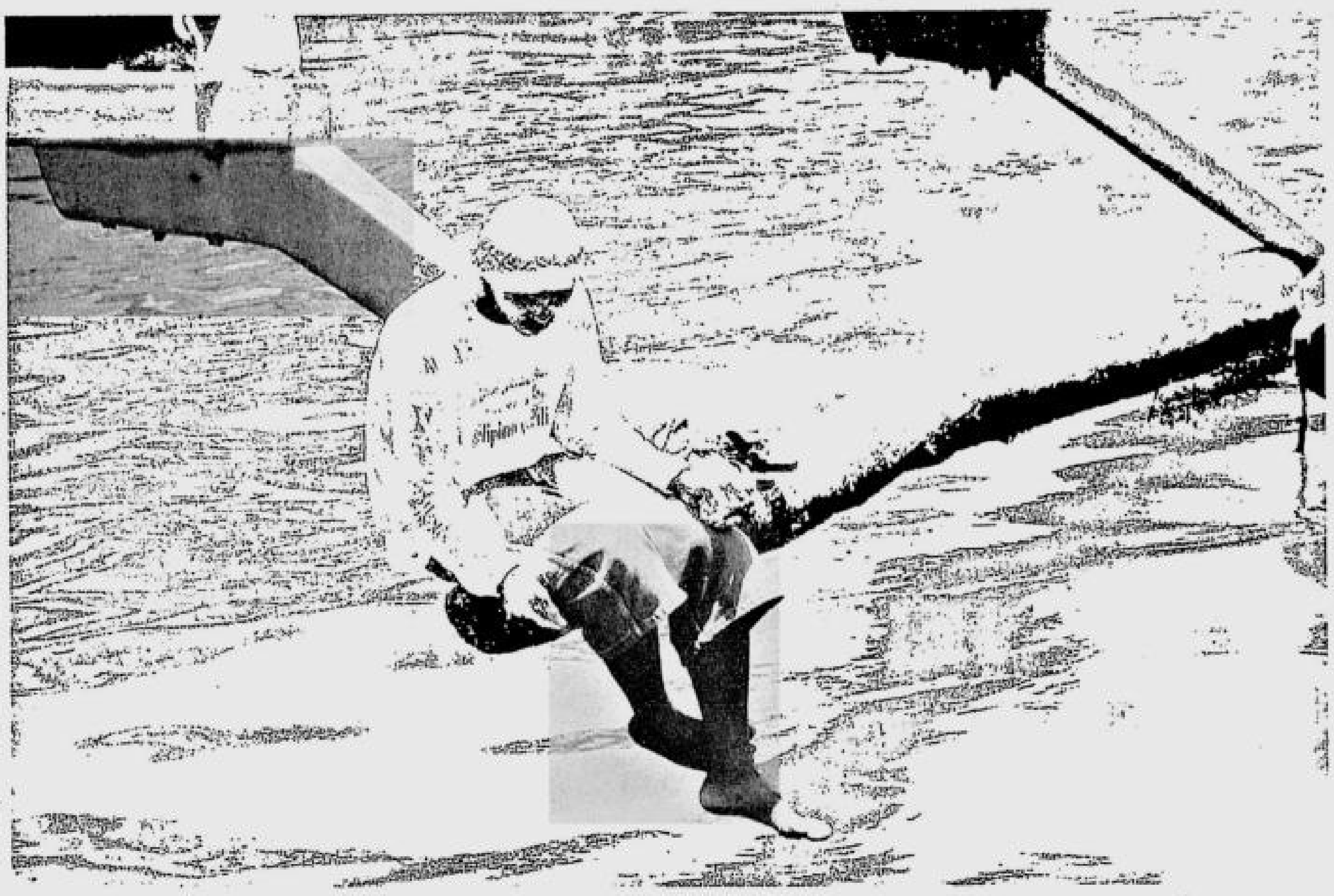


BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

FISHING
It's a slow day for this fisherman at the Sta. Ana Wharf in Davao City who whiles away his time sitting by the side of his boat.

Rescue of 4 RP women in Sabah brothel fails

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Malaysian police on Monday night attempted to rescue four Negrense women who were forced to work in a brothel in Sabah.

But the women reportedly refused to go with their rescuers because they were happy with where they were, said Rep. Ignacio Arroyo Jr. (Negros Occidental, 5th district).

He said he learned about the raid from Marianito Roque, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) administrator.

"It is very possible that the women have been threatened and are afraid to be rescued," said Arroyo.

Another possibility, said the congressman, was that only one of the four Negrense women wanted to be taken out of the karaoke bar that allegedly doubled as a brothel.

Most likely, he added, it was the one who sent a text message to Vice Gov. Isidro Zayco that they were duped by their agent and then sold to a prostitution house in Malaysia.

Coercion

If this was the case, Arroyo said the three others would be asked to sign an affidavit that they were staying there on their own free will.

Zayco brought to the congressman's attention the plight of these four women apparently because they were from the towns of Hinigaran, Himamaylan, Cauayan and Candoni, which belong to the fifth district.

Based on the text message received by the vice governor, the women were allegedly sold into prostitution and could not escape because the people who had custody of them hid them.

The same woman who had sought Zayco's help had also informed Radyo Agong of her plight.

Arroyo said Malaysian police planned to stage another raid because they did not have the names of the four Negrense women.

Garcias file ₱50-M libel suit vs John O

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia and her father, former Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia, yesterday filed a P50-million damage suit against former Sen. John Osmeña for accusing them of using Capitol coffers to fund her campaign for governor in the last elections.

Pablo John Garcia, brother and legal counsel of Gwendolyn, filed the civil case at the regional trial court in Barili town, about 60 km southwest of this city.

The Garcias asked for P40 million in moral damages, P9 million in exemplary damages and P1 million in lawyer's fees.

Osmeña, in a statement, said the case would give "every one the opportunity for a preview of the plunder case now under investigation by the Ombudsman."

He said the P600,000 filing fee was not a "small amount one casually throws away" on a complaint, which he said would not prosper.

"The Garcias are either desperate to divert public attention away from the graft investigation or are just simply awash with excess cash," the former senator said.

Plunder

The case followed Osmeña's allegation that Pablo Garcia, during his term as governor, used P1 billion in provincial funds to finance Gwendolyn's campaign for governor.

He said the illegal disbursement of funds "bankrupted" the province.

He called a press conference last Sept. 12 where he first hurled the accusations. The next day, he wrote the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas and asked that the Garcias be investigated for plunder and graft.

Osmeña also asked that provincial engineer Peter Madera, provincial budget officer Eduardo Habin, provincial accountant Marieto Ypil and provincial treasurer Roy Salubre be included in the investigation for allegedly conniving with the Garcias.

Ombudsman Director Virginia Palanca-Santiago said the Ombudsman would investigate because the letter had no supporting documents.

In an eight-page complaint, the Garcias said Osmeña "falsely and baselessly accused us of having conspired to amass, accumulate or acquire ill-gotten wealth through misappropriation, conversion, misuse or malversation of public funds or raids in the public treasury."

They attached to the complaint a Commission on Audit report saying that Cebu province had P4.8 billion worth of net assets and ranked first among 79 provinces in terms of net assets and total income for 2003.

Report says Bohol inmates had duplicate keys to cell

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—Two of the three prisoners who escaped from the Bohol Detention and Rehabilitation Center (BDRC) had duplicate keys to their prison cells.

This was one of the findings of the provincial board committee on peace and order that looked into the escape of three prisoners from the BDRC last Aug. 29.

According to the committee report, which was presented in Monday's session, inmate Reynaldo Avergonzado told investigators that escapees Virgilio Pojas and Romulo Duterte "had a duplicate key for prison cell no. 23."

Avergonzado reportedly said the BDRC guards usually entrusted the prison keys to "certain favored detainees."

Virgilio and Duterte were cellmates of Avergonzado in cell no. 23. Pojas' brother Diosdado was in cell B.

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado had issued a shoot-to-kill order against the Pojas brothers and Duterte who continued to elude authorities since they bolted jail last Aug. 29.

The Pojas brothers are facing robbery with murder case while Duterte is charged with rape. The escapees were suspected by the police to be behind last week's robbery of a barangay councilman in Sagbayan town.

The committee report said the three escaped through the piggery, which was located near post no. 4. It did not say, however, who owned the piggery.

The report, however, noted that no jail guard was manning the post because of the foul order emitted by the piggery.

Among others, the committee recommended that BDRC warden Anthony Apale be placed under preventive suspension "to have effective and swift implementation of the changes as corrective measures."

ROUNDUP

Cityhood bill re-filed

ILAGAN, Isabela—Rep. Rodolfo Albano III has re-filed the bill converting this capital town into a component city of the province. House Bill 5512, the Ilagan cityhood bill, was authored by former Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano Jr., Albano's father. The Senate failed to tackle the bill last year after it was sidetracked by committee hearings on the Jose Pidal controversy, the younger Albano said. He said Isabela Representatives Edwin Uy (second district), Faustino Dy III (third district) and Anthony Miranda (fourth district) were his co-authors in the new bill. Ilagan Mayor Delfinito Albano said Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, chair of the Senate committee on local government, has promised to sponsor a counterpart bill on Ilagan's cityhood bid. Residents in 1998 junked the conversion of the town into a component city. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

2 escapees captured in Cebu

CEBU CITY—Two escapees from Toboso town, Negros Occidental were separately captured on Tuesday on Mactan Island, Cebu. Jonathan Mahinay, 28, who was facing a rape case, was collared in Barangay Ibabao, Cordova town. Jason Villarito, 18, who was charged with robbery, was arrested in Barangay Babag 2, Lapulapu City. The operation was jointly conducted by the Police Mobile Group of Negros Occidental and the Lapulapu police's Special Weapons and Tactics Team. Insp. Romeo Sultan Leyte, Toboso police chief, said the manhunt for the two escapees reached Cebu after receiving information that they were hiding here, apparently because Mahinay's wife is from Cebu. Mahinay and Villarito were among the six inmates who bolted the Toboso police station on July 1 when most policemen were busy securing the plaza due to the town's founding anniversary celebration.
Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

P30M in fake cigarettes seized

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Officials of the Bureau of Customs on Monday destroyed P30 million worth of confiscated fake cigarettes as part of the intensified campaign against smuggling and other illegal activities inside the freeport. Using a mobile shredder, at least 845 boxes of fake 555 Filter King and Marlboro cigarettes from China were crushed to prevent them from reaching the local market. Lawyer Reynaldo Avelino, deputy collector for operations in Subic, said 246 boxes of fake 555 Filter King cigarettes and 599 boxes of fake Marlboro cigarettes were consigned to Goldlink International (Subic) Inc., an accredited investor here. Records showed that in June 2004, a 20-foot container van arrived here from China via Vietnam. Customs investigators and inspectors seized the container van after they found out that it was loaded with fake branded cigarettes.
Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk

US general's visit to GenSan linked to hunt for Abu

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A ranking US military official made a clandestine visit here yesterday reportedly to check into the operations against Abu Sayyaf bandits in South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat.

A source from the military's intelligence community said Maj. Gen. Gary North, operations director of the US Pacific Command, arrived aboard a private plane at around 2 p.m. He met with local military officials.

On Saturday, North was in Zamboanga City where he met with Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga. He also visited American soldiers training their Filipino counterparts in that city.

There are no joint military exercises being conducted in General Santos.

The military intelligence source, who asked not to be identified, told the INQUIRER that North's visit had something to do with the ongoing manhunt against Abu Sayyaf bandits led by Isnilon Hapilon.

Hapilon's group has reportedly joined forces with the local bandit group Abu Sufia.

Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani and more than 50 of his followers landed on the shore of Palimbang town in Sultan Kudarat sometime in July last year. The military immediately launched a manhunt operation against the group but through the help of the Abu Sufia, Janjalani managed to sneak out of Palimbang.

Last week, the military bombarded the bandits' lair in Barangay Serapinang in Bagumbayan town, Sultan Kudarat, but the bandits were able to escape with the help of the local armed group in the area. They fled toward Senator Ninoy Aquino town in Sultan Kudarat where they reportedly used as human shields civilian residents of hinterland village Baluan to thwart continuing military assault.

The bandits reportedly robbed local residents in the area of their valuables and personal belongings.

Aside from getting updates on the military's manhunt operation against Hapilon, the same military intelligence source said North was here to confer with local military officials regarding the alleged presence of several Jemaah Islamiyah members in Central Mindanao.

The INQUIRER source said there are "several JI members in Central Mindanao. But what we have are mere names, no photographs."

But Col. Alfredo Cayton, commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade, said North's arrival here was "more of an administrative visit." ***Aquiles Z. Zonio with reports from Charlie C. Señase and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Pesticide use seen cause of ozone depletion

By Donna Demetillo
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Benguet and this mountain resort city are known for their luscious strawberries, but unknown to many, the production of this seasonal fruit contributes to the depletion of the ozone layer, which protects all life from the sun's harmful radiation.

Wilhemina Lagunilla, ozone desk officer of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau, cited this example to illustrate that the Cordillera remains a contributor to ozone depletion because of its farmers' use of methyl bromide in pesticides for soil fumigation.

Methyl bromide in fumigants and quarantine applications, structural facilities, buildings and golf courses has 0.6 ozone depletion potential (ODP refers to the amount of ozone depletion caused by a substance).

Lagunilla said the metered dose inhaler used by asthmatic patients is the second ozone depleting substance (ODS) not yet addressed in the country.

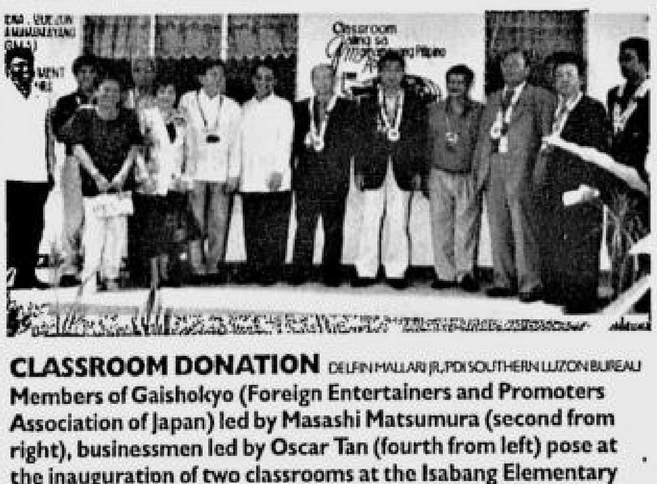
ODS are man-made compounds containing chlorine and bromine, particularly chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons and methyl bromide.

However, Lagunilla said the Philippine Ozone Desk (POD) has taken steps to regulate ODS products. She said the Bureau of Customs, in close coordination with the POD, has banned since 1998 the entry of freon in preparation to stopping its use for refrigerants and air-conditioners, among other things. Freon belongs to the family of CFCs.

She said CFCs were once considered as "miracle compounds" when these were discovered in 1928. These were seemingly harmless to humans and the environment, inert, stable, odorless, non-flammable, non-corrosive and non-toxic.

Lagunilla said in 2003, CFCs accounted for 89.86 of total ODS consumption in the country. CFCs are usually used as cooling agents in refrigerators, propellants in spray cans, aerosols, metered dose inhalers, solvents in computers and electronic circuits, and blowing agents for foam manufacturing and other industrial applications.

Rolando Reyes, chief of the pollution control division of the regional DENR-EMB, said the Cordillera is a "minimum contributor," using only 40-50 kg of CFCs a day.



CLASSROOM DONATION DELFIN MALLARI JR./PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Members of Gaishokyo (Foreign Entertainers and Promoters Association of Japan) led by Masashi Matsumura (second from right), businessmen led by Oscar Tan (fourth from left) pose at the inauguration of two classrooms at the Isabang Elementary School in Lucena City donated by the Gaishokyo.

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Bomb kills boy, hurts 20 in Rizal fiesta

By Luige A. del Puerto

A NIGHT of merriment ended in chaos and weeping shortly before midnight Tuesday in San Mateo, Rizal.

Barangay Dulong Bayan was celebrating the feast of St. Matthew when in the middle of the revelry, an improvised bomb exploded, wounding around 20 people and killing a 4-year-old boy.

Police officials said the explosion was so powerful it was heard several kilometers away.

It also ripped through a steel accordion gate and the ceiling of the store outside of which the bomb exploded.

The bomb—believed to be a form of pillbox—could not have been detonated at a worse time. The feast in Dulong Bayan is known for attracting people.

Gen. Luna, a major road in the barangay, is so packed with people and stalls that authorities close it to vehicles.

That night was no different from previous fiesta celebrations.

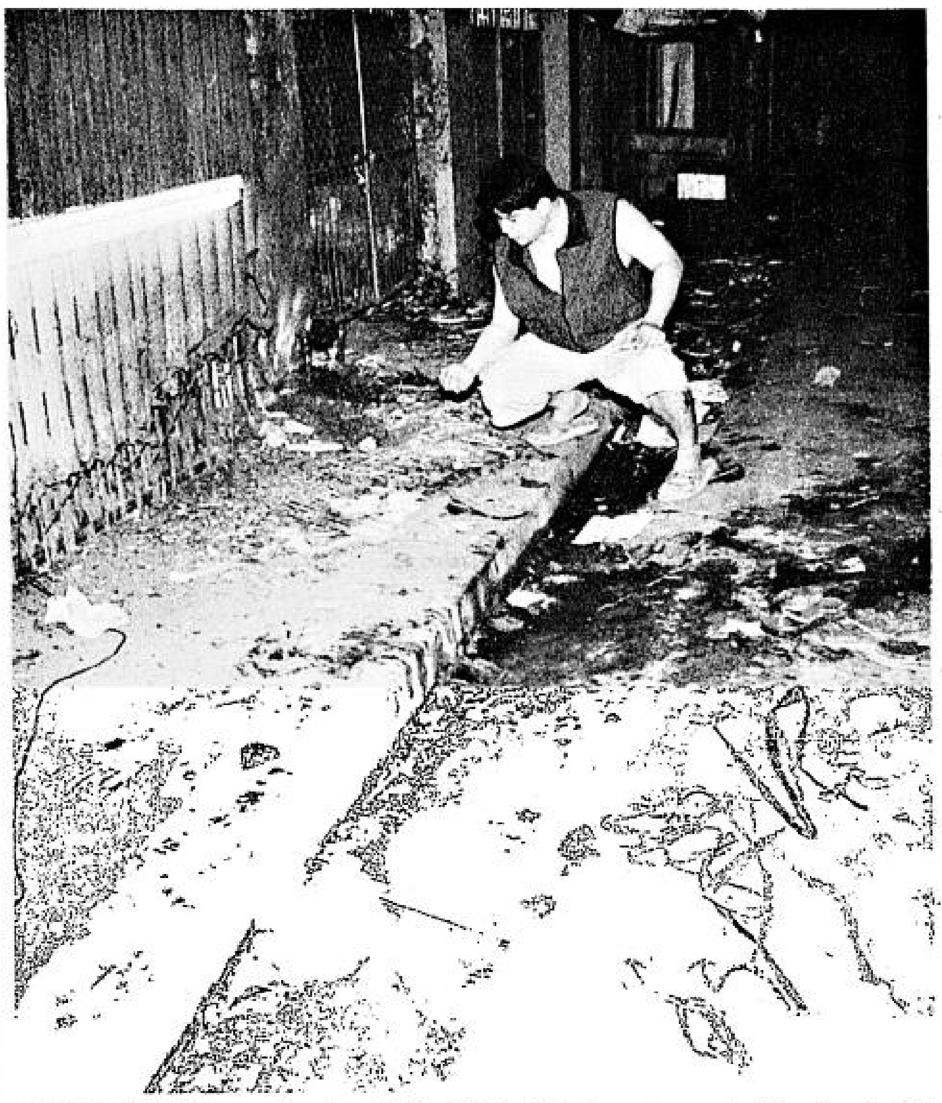
The police identified the dead child as John Paul Ramirez. He suffered from multiple wounds and burns.

His two siblings, Mark John, 7, and Jerry Mae, 2, were also injured in the blast. Their father, Christopher Andal, was seriously hurt as well.

The family, along with several other victims, seemed to have absorbed the full force of the blast since they were only about three meters away from the blast site, police and witnesses said.

The mother, Nelly Ramirez, said she told her family to wait for her be-

BOMB/ A21



AN UNIDENTIFIED man sifts through debris left behind after an improvised bomb exploded during the fiesta at Dulong Bayan, San Mateo, Rizal, Tuesday night. ROMY HOMILLADA

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ADBOARD

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MMDA

20 September 2004

HONORABLE BAYANI "BF" FERNANDO
Chairman
Metropolitan Manila Development Authority
EDSA, Makati City

Dear Hon. Chairman,

For and in behalf of the members of the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (the "OAAP") under the umbrella of the Advertising Board of the Philippines (ADBOARD), I laud your recent attempts to address the over-proliferation of billboards in major thoroughfares in Metro Manila. We likewise are alarmed with the mushrooming presence of illegal billboards, such as those along road rights of way.

First, we state for the record that OAAP members firmly believe in self-regulation, adhere to strict compliance with the law and its own OAAP Code of Ethics and have not located its billboards in such areas. The growing concern created by billboards was created by NON-OAAP member practitioners that precisely avoided or shunned OAAP membership to place their billboards wherever they want. Sadly, advertisers continue to patronize such billboards and help feed the problem further.

We do, however, caution you to proceed carefully on this matter by stating the following points:

1. The matter is first and foremost an issue of freedom of expression enshrined in our Constitution. Any attempt to regulate our industry constitutes prior restraint. Hence, we firmly adhere to a system of self-regulation to address this matter.

2. On the issue of content, we believe that the present system of self-regulation through the ADBOARD is still the most faithful to this constitutionally guaranteed freedom.

3. The issues of jurisdiction and enforcement have to be addressed by government in general and not just the MMDA. Under the present law, the DPWH has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over national road rights-of-way. The present system of multiple assumed jurisdictions of the local governments, the DPWH and the MMDA, however, contributes to the proliferation of illegal billboards rather than hinders it.

4. Finally, from its humble beginnings, outdoor advertising has grown into a multi-billion peso industry. Any regulation on our industry will surely impact on this nation's economy and will result in economic hardship to the Filipino citizens the industry employs.

Given the foregoing, we believe that we have the right to be heard in any matter that will affect our industry. Due process, after all, is another right guaranteed by our Constitution. Together, we can find to address all issues that beset the outdoor advertising industry.

Very truly yours,

IIUGO T. PEREZ, JR.
President
OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION
OF THE PHILIPPINES (OAAP)

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Makati turning heart-friendly

By Margaux C. Ortiz

RESTAURANTS and fast food chains in Makati City would soon have heart-friendly menus as a "healthy alternative," according to city officials.

Makati Health Officer Dr. Lourdes Salud said the city's health office would coordinate with restaurant owners to prepare a healthy menu on top of the greasy and salty foods they usually serve.

"For example, McDonalds or Jollibee could serve low-fat or fat-free foods aside from their usual menu, giving the customer a healthier choice," Salud said.

Salud added that they would be asking the city's 2,000 food stores to propose their healthy menus before the end of the year.

She said establishments that immediately comply with their campaign would be given a "healthy heart sticker."

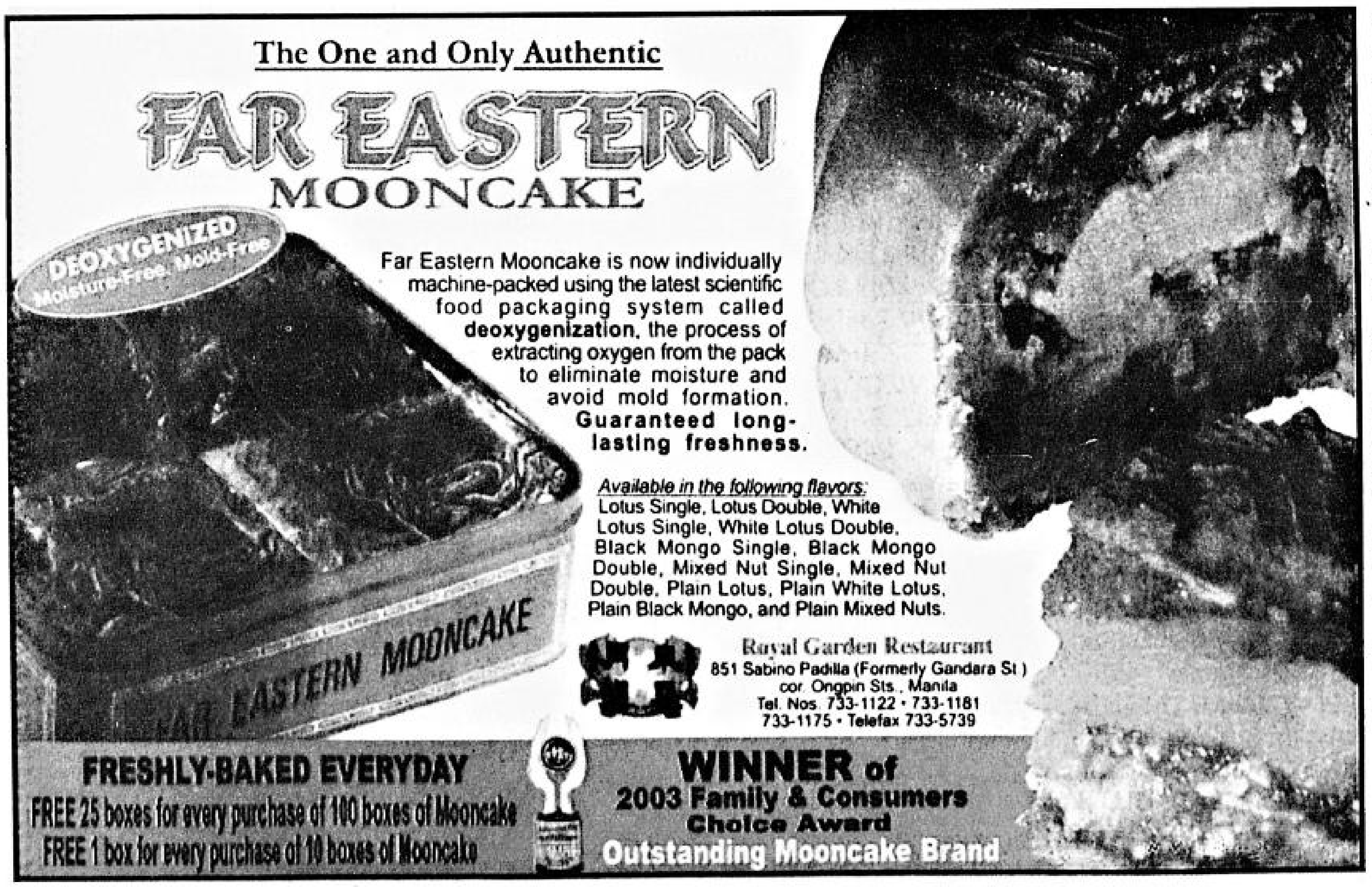
Aside from their local campaign, Salud said Makati City has pledged support for the Philippine Heart Association-Healthy Lifestyle Coalition's projects.

Among the PHA's projects is the "Mag-Healthy Lifestyle (Mag-HL) Tayo sa Resto," which also encourages food establishments to prepare healthy menus.

PHA Advocacy Committee Chair Dr. Efren Vicaldo said in a statement, "Business is business, but these food establishments should remember that serving healthy foods should be their business as well."

Vicaldo said the cities of Pasig, Mandaluyong and Makati had already partnered with the PHA.

Salud noted that cardiovascular ailments caused the most deaths in Makati City for the last five years.



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Mandaluyong bans smoking in City Hall

By Ruth L. Navarra

CHANGE begins in your own backyard.

The Mandaluyong City Hall wants to lead an example to the rest of the city by enforcing the smoking ban within its boundaries.

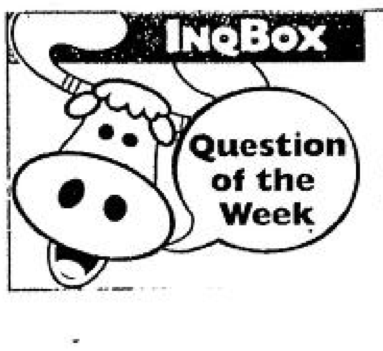
City Ordinance No. 279 S-2004, approved last April 2, dictates that smoking is strictly prohibited in enclosed offices of all government and public buildings, schools, hospitals and medical clinics and public transportations.

In a memorandum written by Ernesto Victorino, city administrator, all smokers caught within the City Hall compound will be fined P1,000, P2,000 and P3,000 for first, second and third offense, respectively.

Third-time offenders could also be jailed for three days but not more than six days, or both at the discretion of the court.

The memorandum also provided a list of smokers' areas, most of which are located at open spaces and parking lots within the City Hall compound.

City officials will be meeting with different drivers' associations, building administrators and mall owners because they plan to implement the ordinance in the whole city by next month.



InqBox

Some militant party-list representatives have protested the reduction of their pork barrel (from 35 million to 10 million pesos each) for the latter half of 2004. Is their protest valid? Why or why not?

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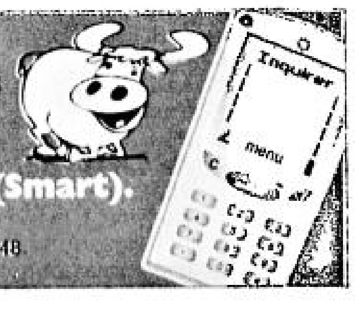

Passenger jumps off ferry

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEARCH and rescue operations are ongoing for a passenger who jumped off the SuperFerry 12 while the vessel was cruising off the Batangas coast on its way to Manila early yesterday morning.

The Philippine Coast Guard identified the passenger as Teodoro Jaena, 32, a native of Iloilo, who allegedly was bothered with problems about his love life.

PCG spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo said Delia Procalia, another ship passenger, said she saw Jaena walking along the ship's economy deck at 5:30 a.m. yesterday, minutes before he jumped overboard.

At that time, the SuperFerry 12 was nearing Talim Island off Balayan, Batangas.

Man overboard

Procalia said Jaena had quietly walked along the deck at the back of the ship for several minutes.

Then, Jaena asked her to hold his wallet and cell phone as he took off his slippers, Procalia added.

Before Procalia was able to stop him, Jaena had already jumped off the ship.

Teams from the SuperFerry 12 were sent out to scour the area in search of Jaena. Crew members were still searching the waters late in the afternoon, but there was no sighting of Jaena.

Later, the crew sought the help of the PCG, who in turn sent rescue teams from its Nasugbu detachment to the area.

SuperFerry 12 Captain Jose Yap said he had learned that Jaena was reportedly bothered by the fact that his girlfriend was supposed to be married to another man.

GSIS made cash cow by siblings

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WINSTON Garcia, president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), and his sister, Carolyn G. Empemano, probably think that the government-owned firm is their cash cow.

According to Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico, the two incurred P5.25 million in unliquidated advances in 10 months in 2001.

Suplico has documents to support his allegation.

If what Suplico says is true, *ang kakapal naman ng mukha ng magkapatid na ito.*

***

Until the fat salaries and allowances of officials of government owned and controlled corporations were exposed, Garcia was receiving P356,979 a month. His sister Carolyn was receiving P98,767 salary plus P31,101.64 in allowances.

These siblings could afford to receive fat salaries and allowances, while other ordinary government officials and employees receive starvation pay.

The word "immoral" is not in the vocabulary of Winston and Carolyn.

***

GSIS senior vice president Enriqueta Disuanco defended Garcia and Empemano.

Disuanco said: "There is nothing wrong or irregular for heads of government agencies and corporations to make cash advances because these are normal financial activities, as long as these advances are properly liquidated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Commission on Audit."

Disuanco probably also makes cash advances although she already has fat salaries and allowances.

Ma'am, if what Garcia and his sister did was not irregular, then it certainly was immoral. Immoral because they wallow in wealth in the midst of extreme poverty among other government people.

***

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza warns drug testing centers against making fraudulent findings for drivers found positive for drug use.

The penalty for such an illegal act is revocation of the accreditation of the drug testing center, Mendoza says.

Mendoza should take a long, hard look at the following drug test centers: MQR, My Chauffeur, Drug Check, Sure Check, One Step, Speed, Pharma CT and Halili-Laceda.

The operators of the above-named centers reportedly are opposing the transfer of the Southern Licensing Office of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) from the Uniwide Coastal Mall.

A government licensing office such as the LTO-South should be insulated from the crowd for it to operate efficiently. Coastal Mall is visited by thousands every day. Most of them are there to shop and not to apply for a driver's license.

Fixers abound at LTO-South because security guards have no control over the crowd and can't tell applicants for driver's license from shoppers.

Bomb kills boy …

From page A20

side the road as she went off to buy food.

They were going home after that.

"I left them there. Moments later, I heard an explosion but I did not mind it," Nelly narrated inside the Amang Rodriguez Medical Center in Marikina City, where most of the blast victims were rushed.

"I continued walking, and I bought some food. When I came back, it was chaotic. I saw bloodied people," she said.

Nelly sensed something was terribly wrong.

She looked for her family, and found her husband carrying the children to a tricycle. They were bloodied.

John Paul died while undergoing treatment at the ARMC.

A witness told the police that he saw a ball, less the size of a volleyball, thrown in the air. As he turned to see where it landed, it exploded, releasing nails and other metal shrapnel.

However, the witness did not see who threw the ball.

"It was a really huge pillbox," said PO2 Cruz. After the incident, the police gathered nails from the site. As well as suffering from burns, many of the blast victims were pierced by nails.

The police have not yet determined the motive nor the culprit in the bombing.

Sr. Supt. Leocadio Santiago, Rizal Police chief, initially said travelling vendors or "tianggeros" might have carried the explosive device for self-defense.

It might have exploded because of mishandling.

But another angle has developed hours after the incident. This angle points to a frat war as the cause of the melee, according to Santiago.

"There is another angle. We received solicited information that there is a frat war in the area. They're just kids, maybe just high school students," Santiago said.

"We are trying to determine which of the two is it," he said.

The police have so far ruled out politics or religious fanaticism as possible motives.

Tolosa 'fiesta'

TOLOSANOS Inc., the association of Metro Manila residents from Tolosa, Leyte, will honor the town's patron saint, St. Michael the Archangel, in a "fiesta reunion" to be held on Sept. 25, 2004 at Sta. Rita College Orphanage Auditorium, Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Sucat, Parañaque. A High Mass will kick off the celebration at 10 a.m.

Registration will start at 8 a.m. This year's *hermano mayor* is James Bernard Daluperit.

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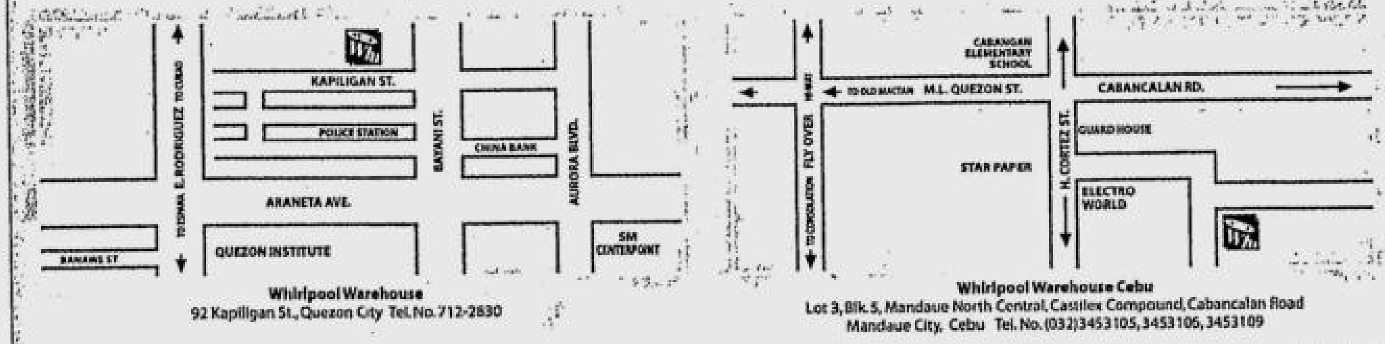
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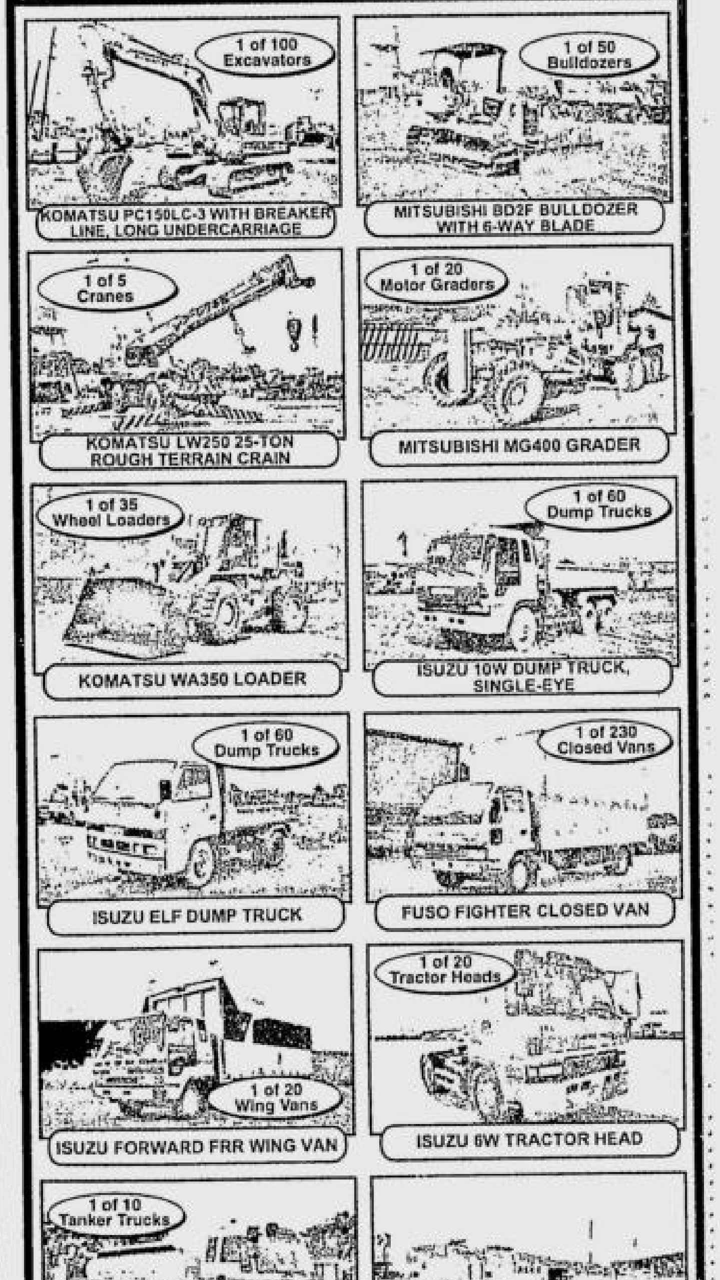
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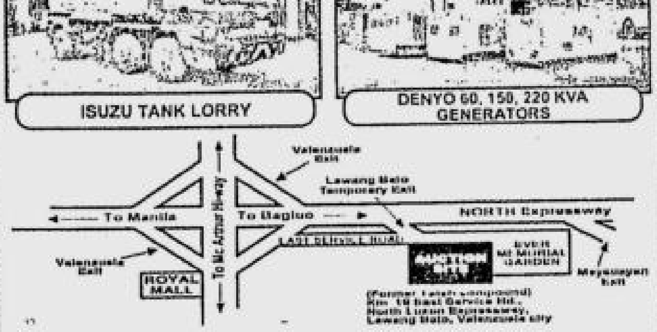
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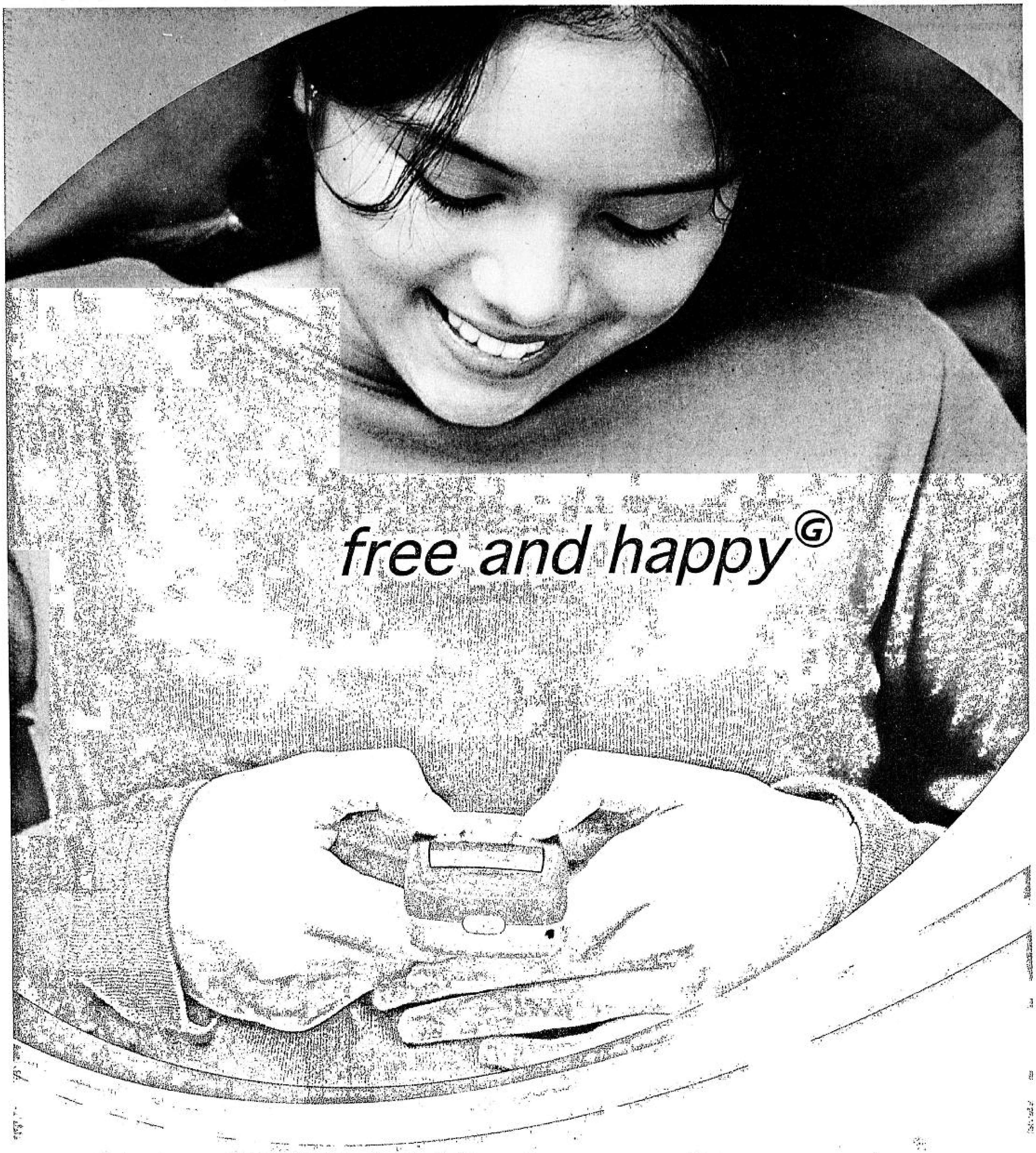

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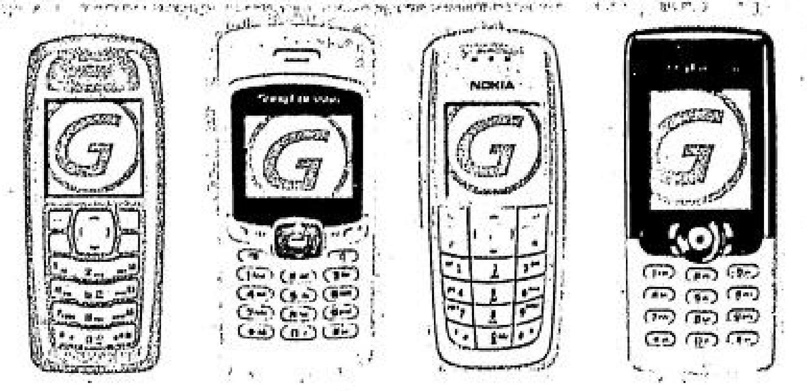

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FIRST TIME SWEET: The PCU Dolphins celebrate their breakthrough victory. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Dolphins bag first NC crown

DOLPHINS/ A24

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The defending champion Far Eastern Tamaraws and perennial contenders De La Salle Archers battle for the UAAP varsity basketball championship starting today at the Araneta Coliseum.

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m.—UST vs Ateneo (Jrs-Game 1 Finals)
4 p.m.—FEU vs La Salle (Srs-Game 1 Finals)

"Experience will play a big part. And I'm thankful for this," said coach Koy Banal.

And La Salle coach Franz Pumaren concedes that this is one factor that make the Tamaraws tough to beat.

"I think our team has matured but we're playing a veteran team," said Pumaren, whose Archers are in their sixth Finals appearance in seven years. "Sixty percent of their team has championship experience.

"It's hard to go up against FEU. They're the

EXPERIENCE/ A25

Mayol stops Indon in 3rd for 19th win

ORIENTAL and Pacific Boxing Federation minimumweight champion Rodel Mayol underscored his superb credentials by easily demolishing OPBF No. 3 La Syukur in the third round of their scheduled 10-rounder yesterday in Jakarta, Indonesia.

A right hook by Mayol (19-0, 15 KOs) put away La Syukur in 1 minute, 47 seconds of the third round of a fight dominated by the Mandaue City fighter from the start.

It was Mayol's fourth victory this year, and his third in Indonesia. Prior to La Syukur, Mayol had also stopped Indonesia's top fighters La Ode Basez and Iwan Key.

Before his Indonesian stints, Mayol won the OPBF crown with a first-round technical knockout victory over then champion Genki Ohnaka in Japan. In his first OPBF defense on May 21, Mayol prevailed over ex-WBC International champ Ernesto Rubillar on a seventh round technical decision.

Mayol is ranked WBC No. 2, WBA and IBF No. 6 and WBO No. 8. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

Ilagan snubs POC probe of swim row

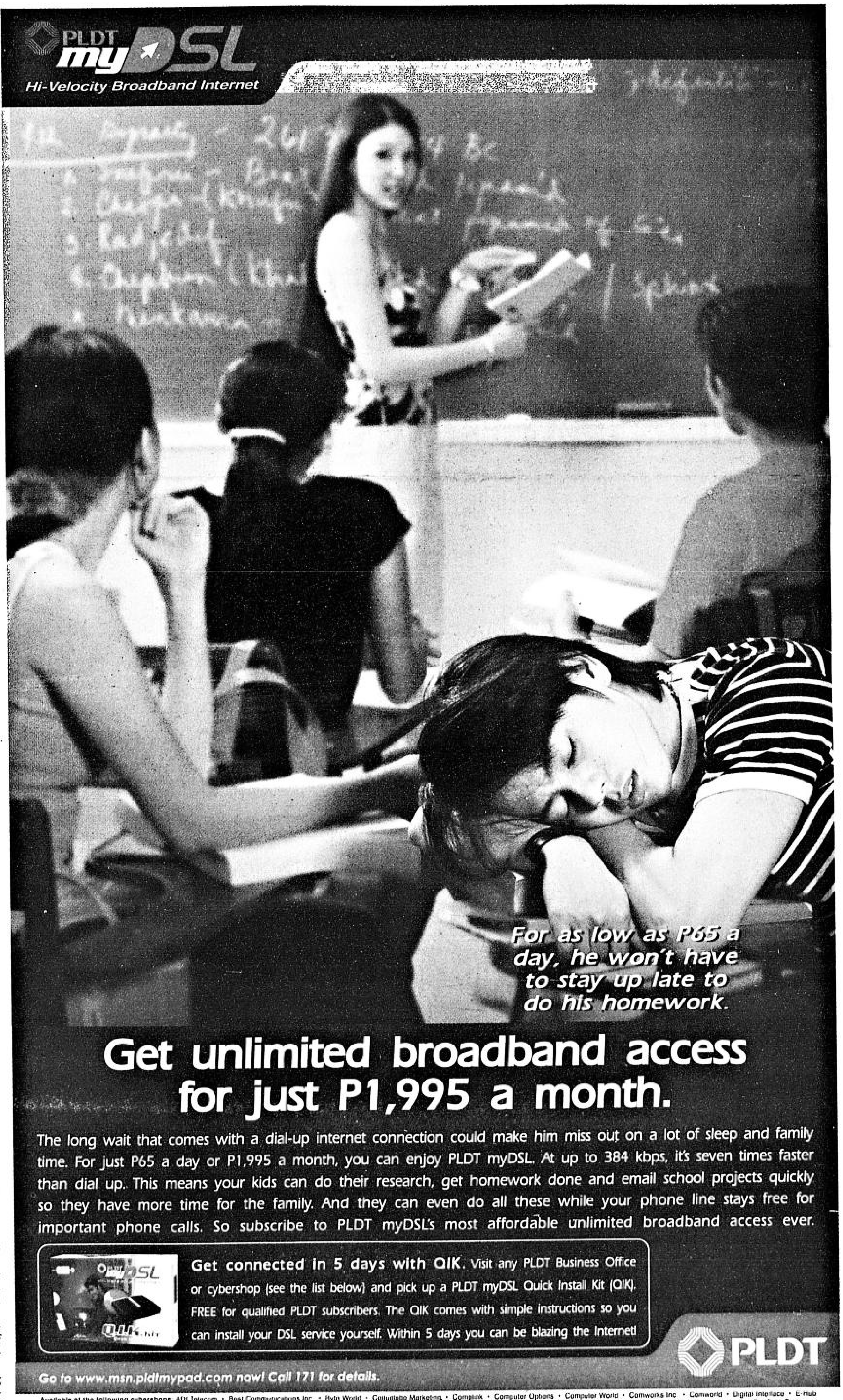
THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee panel looking into the leadership row of the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association can't get going because the group of Pasa head Chito Ilagan has yet to submit itself to the body and clarify its position.

Mark Joseph, elected president by the Pasa board on Sept. 11 in Cebu City, said he has submitted documents to prove his group's worth as the governing body for the sport.

However, the former Olympian said the arbitration committee is still awaiting word from the group which elected Ilagan Pasa president on Sept. 18 in Tiaong, Quezon.

Meanwhile, Pasa director for Central Mindanao Rodney Barretto refuted the claim of Ilagan's group that he was elected VP for Mindanao during the Tiaong election.

"I was neither personally present during the said meeting nor executed any proxy in favor of any member of the Pasa," said Barretto in a letter to the POC. *Marc Anthony Reyes*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CEU's tough job of halting UM begins

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CENTRO Escolar University wants to topple University of Manila from its lofty place in collegiate basketball history.

Whether the CEU Scorpions have what it takes to do that will be known today when they clash with the Hawks at the start of their National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities title series at the Rizal Coliseum.

The best-of-three showdown is set at 1 p.m., after the junior and women's championship battles in the morning.

GAMES TODAY
(*Rizal Coliseum*)
9 a.m.—UM vs St. Clare (Jrs)
11 a.m.—CEU vs AMA (Women)
1 p.m.—UM vs CEU (Srs, Game 1)

The UM Baby Hawks, who are bidding for their third straight crown, and the St. Clare College of Caloocan Baby Saints clash for the junior title at 9 a.m., while the Lady Scorpions and AMA Computer University Lady Titans dispute the women's title at 11.

UM president Ernesto delos Santos said the Hawks, whose streak of 72 wins in the league is a record in collegiate play, will try to sweep the championship for the fourth straight year.

The Hawks, also three-time intercollegiate champs, have so far won 18 games this season.

"This is going to be an exciting finals because if there is one team that is capable of stopping UM this year, it is CEU," said Naascu president Dr. Ernest Jay Adalem of SCC.

The Hawks will draw firepower from Jovit Gomez and Ryan Regalado, who are averaging 19 and 16 points per game, respectively.

The Scorpions will rely on top scorer June Macasaet, Almer Cristobal and Dexter Carillo.

ASIAN UNDER-14 TENNIS

Balce reaches q'finals

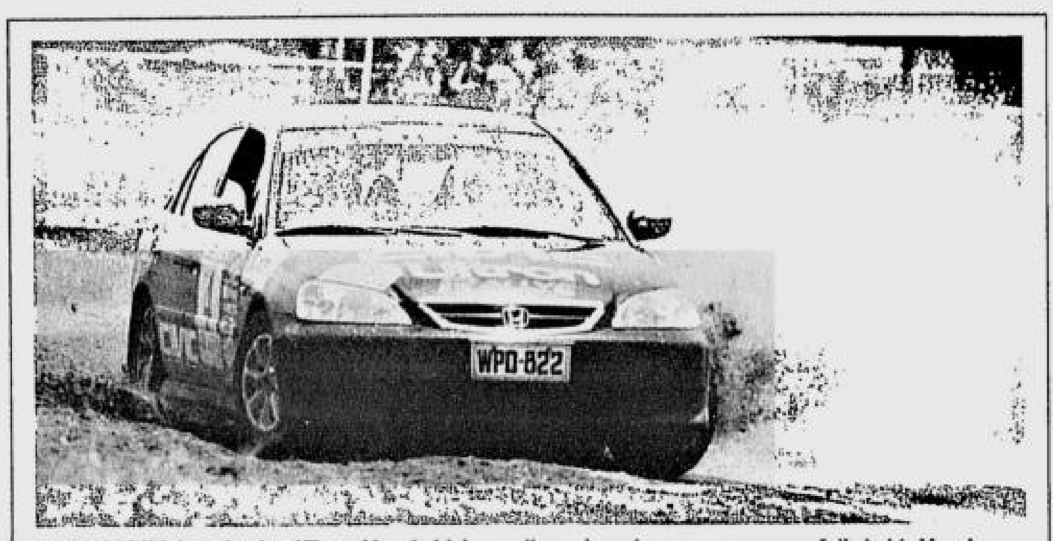
MARK Balce downed Kennex Abadia, 7-6 (6), 6-2, yesterday to reach the boys' singles quarterfinals of the Futures Foundation-Asian Tennis Federation (ATF) 14-under Series at the Ynares Sports Center in Pasig City.

Balce, a seventh grader at the Ateneo, forged a showdown with compatriot Francis Casey Alcantara of Cagayan de Oro, who scored a 6-2, 6-2 victory over Malaysian Zhia Hwa Chong.

Top seed Pablo Olivarez downed Malaysian Mark Pee Kwang Xin, 6-4, 6-0, to advance against compatriot Jose Emmanuel Narvaez, a 7-5, 6-1 winner over compatriot Akio Hari Ong Sy.

Second seed El Santo Santos outclassed Malaysian Han Zhou Tan, 6-1, 6-1, to set up a duel with Cebuano James Carl Canete, who overpowered Myanmar's Kyaw Naing Aung, 6-3, 6-1.

In other matches, John Franc Gil Largo won over Joshua Tan Ho, 6-4, 6-1, and Tomas Apacible prevailed over Roman Floreza, 6-3, 6-3.



QUICK SPIN: Ivan Isada of Team Honda kicks up dirt as he takes a curve masterfully in his Honda Civic Vtec en route to victory in the RP-13 class of the National Rallycross Series last Saturday at the Liwasang Ipil-Ipil in Pasay City. The race was part of the fifth leg of the 2004 circuit.

In the girls' singles, top-ranked Malaysian Jawariah Nordin blanked the Philippines' Martina Rivero, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against Filipina Zhane Quitara, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Myanmar's Khaine Nyee.

Also advancing was third seed Jessica Agra, who clobbered Julie Em Botor, 6-0, 6-2. Agra will meet the winner between fifth seed Vythinatha Chellpriya of Malaysia and Filipina Anne Christine Patrimonio.

Other locals seeing action in this weeklong event sponsored by the Australian Open are second seed Trudy Gine Amoranto, Ma. Regina Santiago, Sarah Jane Lim, Victoria Magaway and Noelle Nikki Zoleta.

Dolphins bag first NC crown

From page A23

By Jasmine W. Payo

TEN minutes from the final buzzer the Philippine Christian U Dolphins were already whooping it up.

The Dolphins delivered the best first half they could play and just stayed fabulous as they swept the University of Perpetual Altas, 72-60, at the Araneta Coliseum yesterday to bag their first ever crown in the 80th NCAA senior basketball tournament.

"When I came to this team, I didn't know the situation. And I told them my only reason in accepting this job is to give them the championship. It sounded *mayabang* (a boast) at that time. And I know that they think I was too strict, *pero sinasabi ko sa kanila na magbubunga ito* (but I told them we will be rewarded)," said new PCU coach Loreto Tolentino, who steered one of the most amazing turnarounds the league has ever seen.

And the spartan training worked wonders for the former whipping boys Tolentino inherited from Jimmy Mariano.

"Our coach said we had the talent. He was able to develop us and we gained confidence in our abilities," said Finals MVP Robert Sanz, who finished with 17 points and nine rebounds.

Most Improved Player Ian Garrido added: "*Yung* discipline *ni* coach *ang nagpanalo. Hanggang sa pagtulog sa* dorm, *binabantayan niya kami* (His discipline led us to this win. Even at bedtime, he was watching us)."

PCU, which joined the league eight years ago, set the tone for a big game early on, posting a double-digit lead right from the first quarter, 20-9.

Perhaps the biggest contribution of Tolentino, who was serving a one-game suspension when the Dolphins won the title series opener by two points last Friday, was producing the first player to win the Most Valuable and Rookie of the Year awards in Gabby Espinas.

In junior play, the Letran Squires forged a winner-take-all showdown with the San Beda Cubs after nipping the defending champions, 81-76.

The scores:

Finals-Game Two (Srs)

PCU 72—Sanz 17, Espinas 14, Castro 11, Garrido 9, Retaga 7, Gementiza 5, Solis 4, Belga 3, Cecilia 2.

PERPETUAL 60—Bauzon 17, Bamson 9, Javier 9, Cuenco 8, Misa 6, Refuerzo 2, Mendoza 0.

Quarters: 20-9, 37-25, 63-45, 72-60.

SPORTSWATCH

Top amateurs sign up for Riviera golf tilt

THE RIVIERA Amateur golf championship gets underway Sept. 28 with some of the country's top players in the ranks expected to vie for top honors in various divisions at Riviera's Couples and Langer courses in Silang, Cavite. Juvic Pagunsan, Marvin Dumandan, Jay Bayron, Kim Chang Hoi and Raymund Sangil have signified their intention to play in the Championship division, spread over four days at the par-71 hazard-laden Langer course. Registration is ongoing with tournament fee pegged at P2,000 (P1,500 for Riveria members). The Championship field of this event, sponsored by Pacsports and DHL, is limited to 30 players with a separate 36-hole Championship II division set for 20 players on Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Other 36-hole events on tap are the classes A (handicaps 4.8-9), B (9.1-15), both at Langer, and C (15.1-21.1) at Couples. Senior players will have two categories with those aged 55-64 set to play Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at Langer and those aged 65-and-above slated to vie for honors Sept. 29 and Oct. 1 at Couples.

King of the Road registration

REGISTRATION for the 8th Annual adidas King of the Road race slated for October 3 and is now ongoing at the ground floor of the Vasquez Madrigal Plaza Bldg. at 51 Annapolis St. in San Juan. Registration fee is P200 inclusive of an adidas running singlet and a ticket to the carbo loading night on October 1 at the adidas Sports Kamp at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig. Registration hours is 8:30 to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 9:00 a.m. up to 12 noon on Sunday. Deadline for submission of entries is on September 29. The race is co-presented by Globe Gentext, and backed by McDonalds, Snickers chocolate bar, adidas watches, Powerade, Viva Mineral water, adidas fragrance, Paintball Empire and Milo.

Altamirano to aid aspiring varsity players

PBA Eric Altamirano is holding the Coach E basketball school with the aim of helping out aspiring varsity players through a sound training program that focuses thoroughly on fundamentals, shot training and position specific aspects of the game. Despite numerous requests from parents and students to add more classes to its present schedules at the adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio Global City, Reyes Gym in Mandaluyong and Club 650 in Libis, Altamirano said only limited slots are open to ensure personalized attention. The next sessions for beginners, intermediate and advance classes are every Monday starting Sept. 27 for fundamentals and shot training (adidas Sports Kamp, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.). Other classes are Fridays (Club 650 Libis, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.) and Saturdays (Reyes Gym, 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.). Interested parties may call 8842778 to 86 local 41-42 or 09189293129 or at e-mail at iba_phil@yahoo.com.

Powerlifting interschool tourney slated

THE POWERLIFTING Association of the Philippines will hold its fourth interschool championships on Sept. 25-26 at the activity area of Robinson's Place, Manila. The event is open to men and women 14 to 24 years old who are currently enrolled in a school or university. Competition will be conducted in the squat, bench press and dead lift events. Francisco J. Elizalde, IOC representative to the Philippines, will grace the opening ceremony at 11:30 a.m. on Sept. 25. The event is supported by Robinson's Malls, Pagcor, Store Shop/Blazing Products, Designer Whey/Sports Nutrition, Jollibee, Nestlé 0% Fat Ice Cream, Golden Vhine Laboratories, Pro Gym and Chase Technologies.

FIBL launches Ambassador's Cup

THE FILIPINO-INDIAN Basketball League (FIBL) now on its 5th year, opens its 2004 season this weekend in Makati. The tournament is dubbed as The Ambassador's Cup in honor of the Indian Ambassador to the Philippines, Her Excellency Navrekha Sharma, who will be hosting a cocktail opening of the league at her North Forbes residence this Saturday afternoon. Expected to grace the FIBL cocktail opening are special invited guests Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, PBA Commissioner Noli Eala and PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad. Hardcourt action in the FIBL, sponsored this year by Globe Platinum, Honda Cars-Caloocan, and Molten as the official ball, starts on Sunday, Sept. 26 at the Makati Coliseum with former champions Knights going up against the Mike Advani-led Kings at 2:30 p.m., followed by the match featuring defending champions Bombay Bombers against Blue Sharks.

Jiao, Araneta rule NCA derby

BREEDER Boy Jiao of Rizal and Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta stretched their winning run to clinch the championship of the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Stag Derby Monday night at the Araneta Coliseum. Jiao and Araneta have won two hard-earned championships so far. They also topped the first leg on Aug. 31 and Sept. 2. Rep. Gerry Espina shared the limelight by emerging as co-champion. The next NCA 7-Stag Derby unfolds on Oct. 5 and 7, with NCA president Ito Ynares, former DILG undersecretary Jun Santiago and Jiao as hosts. Ynares said that only those points earned in NCA-sanctioned stag derbies will be the basis in choosing the Stagfighter winner.

LGBA 7-Stag series fires off

THE FIRST in a series of 7-stag derbies of the Luzon Gamefowl Breeders Association kicks off at Roligon Mega Cockpit on Saturday, September 25. The action then shifts to Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City on Sept. 27 for the second round of eliminations and the championship on the 29th. In full support of this 3-day competition are Vitarich Corp., Lakpue Drug, Excellence Gamefowl Specialists', Robichem Laboratories, Thunderbird and Asvet. For more details and reservation of cockhouses, call 9267808 / 9245072, 9245051 loc. 128 or thru 09205851940.

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Franz tests Koy

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

AMONG the happiest men I know following La Salle's ouster of Ateneo in the semifinals of this year's UAAP season are Rep. Monico "Nyoks" Puentevella of Bacolod City and AGA (Antonio G. Arellano) of RMN 558's "Ito ang Batas." Hardly had the smoke of battle cleared and what did I have but text messages from the two gentlemen.

"I am sorry that Ateneo lost, but you know, all good things don't last," said Nyoks. "See you soon, hopefully with your Congressman Espine joining us for lunch."

Said AGA: "I was in Hong Kong, but I had to monitor the battle almost blow by blow on the cell phone because, call me a fanatic, of which I really am and I won't mind. La Salle is my alma mater and nothing thrills me more than the sight of La Salle winning over Ateneo every time they meet."

AGA said that, like Mike Enriquez of GMA's dzBB, he also sings the La Salle hymn a cappella in his 558 khz radio program each time the Archers win.

"This time, I sang it twice the morning after La Salle beat Ateneo on Sunday," said AGA.

Oh, well, what can I say?

There's no fanaticism more pronounced than the one we see being dished out by students and alumni alike every year in the UAAP each time the La Salle-Ateneo duel is on.

It's just too bad that Ateneo faltered in the end. But in fairness, Ateneo did suffer a lot this year because it lost Larry Fonacier, its top gun, due to an injury with the league barely two games old. Although it ran up a seven-game winning streak to top the first round, Ateneo lost steam coming home, hobbled by the lack of a steady gunslinger in Fonacier.

For La Salle, it was sweet revenge.

In 2002, the Archers lost the crown to the Engles, thereby ending La Salle's title streak at four from 1998 to 2001. And then last year, Ateneo ousted La Salle before bowing to Far Eastern University in the Finals.

Even though Ateneo beat La Salle in their first meeting this year after overcoming a 15-point deficit, that was no gauge as to the real firepower of the Archers. True enough as in their next two meetings, La Salle won convincingly.

The game on Sunday was almost a photocopy of their Game 2 meeting where La Salle virtually pounded Ateneo into submission with blazing run-and-gun attacks and a defense that could have even blocked the assault of the combined Allied forces onto Nazi Germany in World War II.

Macmac Cardona typified La Salle's deadly game by firing 24 points as he spearheaded an offense built on blinding dashes for the goal and decorated it with nifty passing, some of which were of the eye-pleasing, no-look pass variety.

The third quarter of Sunday's game said it all—La Salle poured in 19 points via blitzkrieg while starving Ateneo to a measly 7 points. That jacked up a 30-28 halftime La Salle lead to 49-35, from which Ateneo never recovered.

The final 69-55 score was the final proof of La Salle's superiority over a totally outclassed Ateneo.

Today marks the start of the championship series between La Salle and FEU in the 67th season of the UAAP.

FEU coach Koy Banal was quoted as saying he preferred defending the crown against La Salle than Ateneo.

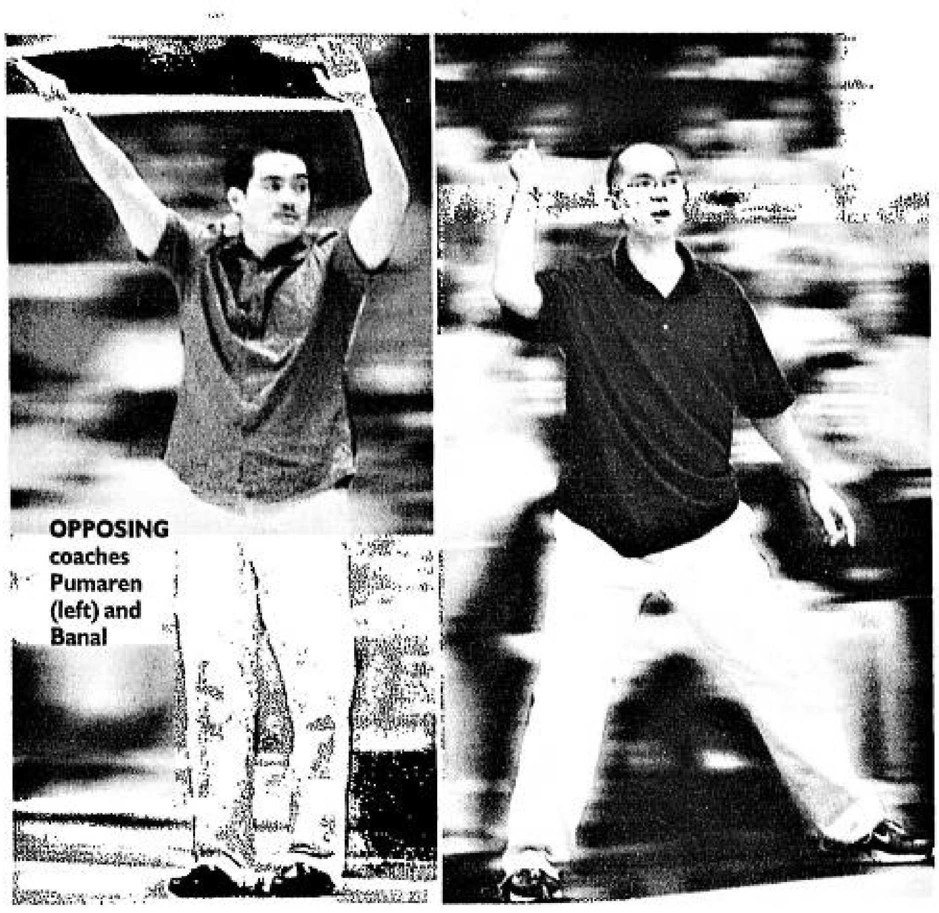
I don't know what Koy is up to. But one sure thing I know is that he is up against the best coach in the league for nearly a decade now in La Salle's Franz Pumaren. In fact, with six Finals stints in his name in the last seven years, I wonder why no PBA team has bothered to tap the services of Franz Pumaren.

Perhaps, the perks in the UAAP have become too tempting to resist that's why Franz Pumaren hasn't hopped into the other yard?

Maybe, Nyoks and AGA have the answer.

***

FASTBREAK. Tito Rey Bautista will re-open his Tito Rey Restaurant tonight at Sunvar Plaza on Amorsolo St., Makati City. There will be boozing, dancing and singing to go with the main fare for the evening, which is eating, what else? Tito Rey, the pioneer behind the "kamayan craze" in the restaurant business that began in the '70s, is actually back from a long stint in America. Welcome home, Tito Rey... Dr. Nanding and Wilma Lopez will be the proud hosts to their friends tonight when they celebrate the feat recently achieved by one of their two daughters, the charming Maricelle. Maricelle, whose sister Minnie is taking up law at San Beda, had passed the board of medical exams with flying colors. Cheers, doc!



OPPOSING coaches Pumaren (left) and Banal

Experience . . .

From page A23

number one team and we really have to be very competitive."

The best-of-three series will also be a showdown between the MVP frontrunners: FEU's Arwind Santos (13.4 points per game, 10.2 rebounds per game) against La Salle's Mac Cardona (16.6 ppg, 5.9 rpg).

Gametime is set at 4 p.m., right after the junior championship opener between the defending champion Ateneo Eaglets and the University of Santo Tomas Tiger Cubs at 2 p.m.

FEU and La Salle, which earned the twice-to-beat advantage in the Final Four, wasted no time wrapping up their semifinal assignments.

The Tamaraws disposed of the University of the East Warriors, 71-64, last Thursday, while the Archers drubbed their arch rivals Ateneo Eagles, 69-55, last Sunday.

The Archers' victory Sunday extended their winning streak to eight, the longest his season. But it was the Tamaraws who dealt the Archers their last defeat, 70-52, on Aug. 14.

La Salle, however, also owned a rout against the reigning champions, 69-54, in their first round encounter.

The Archers and the Tamaraws also clashed in the 2000 Finals, which La Salle swept, 2-0. They had four other titles meetings in the last two decades. La Salle winning in 1989 and 1998 and FEU in 1991 and 1997. *Jasmine W. Payo*

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Red Bull overpowers Spring-Laguna cagers

DARUSSALAM, Brunei—Red Bull Barako booked its second straight victory in the 4th Shell Invitational basketball tournament here Tuesday night by crushing another Philippine squad, Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna, 91-75, at the National indoor stadium in Berakas.

Powered by Lordy Tugade, Mick Pennisi and Rico Villanueva, the Barako of coach Yeng Guiao raced to a commanding 50-30 halftime lead and never looked back.

Red Bull posted its biggest lead of 23 points at the end of the third quarter.

Spring, top team in the North division of the ongoing National Basketball Conference, was reinforced by Americans Keith Friel and Faheem Nelson.

Tugade topscored for Red Bull with 14 points. Pennisi, Villanueva and Cyrus Baguio had 13 each and Junthy Valenzuela chipped in 10.

"I'm happy with the boys' performance," Red Bull Barako team owner George C. Chua said when he learned of the team's second straight victory in the tough tournament.

Red Bull was playing Brunei's national team at press time yesterday. Guiao's team goes up next against Purefoods, then Jones Cup champion You Lon Twisters of Taiwan and the Hankook Raiders of South Korea.

Red Bull made a rousing debut Sunday by blasting the Shanghai Sharks, mother team of the Houston Rockets' Yao Ming, 88-74.

Davonn Harp propelled Red Bull to its first win, scoring 20 points, grabbing eight rebounds and giving three assists in 25 minutes of play. Villanueva had 16, Tugade and Pennisi 14 each and new Barako Vergel Meneses contributed 11.

OFFICIALS and players of the Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna team, led by delegation head Tito Palma and team manager Dennis Villa-Ignacio, just before they flew to Darussalam, Brunei, Saturday to play in the Sultan's Cup invitational basketball tournament.

Ex-pros head NBC All-Star selections

FORMER pros Egay Echavez of Ozamiz Cotta and Ogie Gumatay of Forward Taguig head the South and North Selections, respectively, in the National Basketball Conference All-Star Weekend set Oct. 1 and 2 in Baguio City.

Joining Echavez in the South team to be coached by former PBA star Al Solis of Tribu Sugbu are Marlon Basco, also of Ozamiz; Ruben dela Rosa, Chico Lanete, Ardie Larong and Alfie Grijaldo of Cebu; Francis Sanz and Carlos Sayon of the Iloilo Warriors and Julius Navales and Jason Alfeche of the Cagayan de Oro Stars.

Playing with Gumatay in the North squad to be handled by Baguio's Nap Garcia are Cardinals Jun Balares, Obet Giron, Melvin Fontanilla, Edbert Tori and Efren Valdes, Batangas' Sonny Manucat and Rodel Mallari, Taguig's Jimboy Robillos and Spring-Laguna's MC Caceres.

The All-Star game will be played on Oct. 2. A clinic for basketball fans and several skills' contests like the Three-Point Shootout, Slamdunk, Two-Ball and Speed Challenge will be held on Oct. 1.

The All-Star Weekend highlights the ongoing NBC National Championship sponsored by Panasonic, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring, Mineral Water, Cebu Ferries, Air Philippines, Supercat, Skygo Motorcycles, Trans-Asia, Accel and Molten.

Laylo moves up; So close behind

Standings after Round 6:

Men: 4.5 points—NM Laylo; **4.0**—*IM Gonzales, IM Garma, NM Nolte; **3.5**—FM Donguines, *So; **3.0**—IM Nadera, IM Roca, *NM Senador; **2.5**—IM Dableo, FM Sales, NM Barbosa; **2.0**—NM Carlos, *NM Maga, *NM Diaz; **1.5**—NM Perez, Fazon. Women (after Round 4): **3.0**—Cuizon; **2.5**—WIM Mendoza, WFM Lomibao, WNM Castellano, WNM Salvador; **2.0**—WNM Abanes, Rivera, Camacho; **1.5**—WNM Cruz; **1.0**—WIM Mariano, WNM Alvarez

TAGAYTAY CITY—Ten-year-old Wesley So claimed his third victim in National Master Roland Joseph Perez Tuesday night to stay within sight of pacesetter NM Darwin Laylo in the National Chess Championship at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here.

So, the youngest ever finalist in the annual event, tallied 3.5 points in five games, a point behind Laylo's 4.5 in six games. So, who bested Perez in 44 moves of a Sicilian, took a bye in the fourth round.

Laylo posted his fourth win in a row at the expense of Fide Master Jesse Noel Sales in 23 moves of an English Opening.

Fifth round co-leaders IM Jayson Gonzales, IM Chito Garma and NM Rolando Nolte split their respective sixth round matches to share second place with 4.0 points.

The top three players will join seeded players GMs Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio and GM-elect Mark Paragua in the team bound for the World Chess Olympiad slated Oct. 14-31 in Majorca, Spain. *Marlon Bernardino*

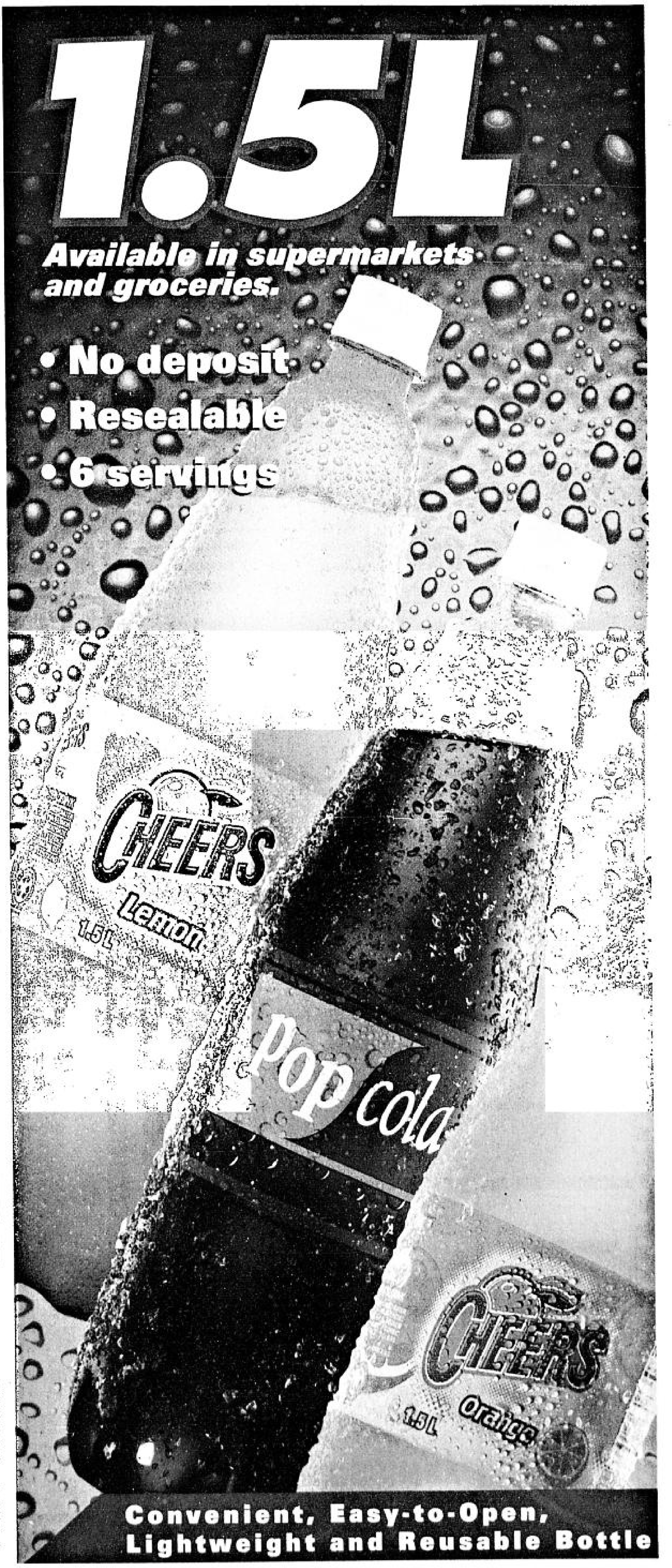
Hundred Islands triathlon set Sunday

SPORTS tourism in the country's north gets a boost with the holding this weekend of the first-ever Hundred Islands Triathlon Open in Pangasinan.

Triathletes from Metro Manila and Northern Luzon are expected to battle for top honors in the punishing race sanctioned by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines.

The spint distance event, which kicks off at 6 a.m. Sunday in Lucap Point in Alaminos town, is a project of the Department of Tourism as part of its program to promote sports tourism in the country's different regions in the country, said TRAP president Tom Carrasco Jr.

It is held in conjunction with the National Tourism Week celebration and in cooperation with the Alaminos city government headed by Mayor Hernani Braganza.



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11	NOTEBOOK
12	DODGEBALL

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2	TOOLBOX MURDERS
3	THE NOTEBOOK
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7	BOURNE SUPREMACY
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12	TERMINAL

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10	ANACONDAS

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4	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING

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2	THE TERMINAL
3	BOURNE SUPREMACY
4	FENG SHUI

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2	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
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4	TERMINAL
5	MINDHUNTERS
6	FENG SHUI

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2	FENG SHUI
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4	BOURNE SUPREMACY

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4	BOURNE SUPREMACY
5	THE TERMINAL
6	MINDHUNTERS
7	FENG SHUI
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9	ANACONDAS
10	HEAVEN'S POND

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4	THE NOTEBOOK
5	DODGEBALL
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2	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
3	FENG SHUI
4	ANACONDAS

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2:00/4:15/6:30/
8:45/10:35 LFS/
11:00 LMF/12:50 END

2
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2:20/4:30/6:40/
8:50/10:25 LFS/
11:00 LMF/12:35 END

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jennifer garner
13 going on 30
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MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
Telephone: 633.2227 / 633.7851 loc. 171

PREMIERE THEATRE

(DOLBY)	BOURNE SUPREMACY R-13

1 (DOLBY)	FENG SHUI PG-13
2 (DOLBY)	BOURNE SUPREMACY PG-13
3 (DOLBY)	THE TERMINAL GP
4 (DOLBY)	EXORCIST R-13

SUPER CINERAMA
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CINERAMA COMPLEX RECTO
tel 733.4238

1. (DOLBY)	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2.	FENG SHUI
3.	SECRETARY
4.	HEAVEN'S POND
5.	TAKAW TINGIN

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	RESERVE
2	ANACONDAS
3	KAPAG ANG PALAY NAGING BIGAS MAY BUMAYO
4 (SDDS)	TAKAW TINGIN
5	FENG SHUI
6 (DOLBY)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
7 (DTS)	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	FENG SHUI
2	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
3	TAKAW TINGIN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	TAKAW TINGIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
5	FENG SHUI

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	SECRETARY
2	TAKAW TINGIN
3	ANACONDAS
4	FENG SHUI
5 (DOLBY)	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
6	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY)	FENG SHUI
2	TAG-INIT

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (SDDS)	FENG SHUI
2 (SDDS)	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
3 (DTS)	THE TERMINAL
4 GOLD (DTS)	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	THE NOTEBOOK
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	FENG SHUI
8 (PRML)	HEAVENS POND
9 (PRML)	SAVED
10 (PRML)	13 GOING ON 30

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
ALIMALL CINEPLEX
tel 911-3101 loc 8242 / 8281 / 8397

3 (Dolby)	FENG SHUI
4 (SDDS)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 (DTS)	EXORCIST
6 (Dolby)	HEAVEN'S POND
7 (Dolby)	SAVED

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	FENG SHUI
2	MIND HUNTERS
3	RESERVED
4	TAKAW TINGIN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
2	FENG SHUI
3 (DTS EX)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	THE NOTEBOOK
2	FENG SHUI
3 (DOLBY)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
4 (DTS)	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	FENG SHUI
2	ANACONDAS
3 (DOLBY)	HAUNTED SPIRIT
4 (DTS)	ANACONDAS

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	ANACONDAS
2	FENG SHUI

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	FENG SHUI
2 (DOLBY)	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
3 (DOLBY)	THE TERMINAL
4 (DOLBY)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	
2	FENG SHUI
3 (DTS)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2 (DTS)	FENG SHUI
3 (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS
4	BANGKOK HAUNTED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	FENG SHUI
2 (DOLBY)	LAWS OF ATTRACTION
3 (DTS)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
4	BANGKOK HAUNTED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	STEPFORD WIVES
2	FENG SHUI
3 (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	FENG SHUI
2	TOOLBOX MURDER
3 (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS
4 (DTS)	13 GOING ON 30

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 7953320

1	THE TERMINAL
2	FENG SHUI
3 (DOLBY)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ANACONDAS
2	TAMPISAW
3	TAKAW TINGIN
4 (DTS)	FENG SHUI

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2	BIKTIMA
3 (DTS)	
4	BANGKOK HAUNTED
5	FENG SHUI

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	DODGEBALL
2	THE TERMINAL
3 (DTS)	ANACONDAS
4 (DOLBY)	FENG SHUI

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	FENG SHUI
2	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
3	TAG-INIT
4	THE TERMINAL

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	TAKAW TINGIN
2	FENG SHUI

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Properly handled festival can do wonders

From page A28

activities and organizations.

We see the need for these activities to be funded, but we also know that quality local films need to be produced for the Filipino movie audience. So, we agree with some of our film leaders that another annual film festival should be put up, this time with a clear preference for quality productions.

The plan is particularly creditable, because it seeks to encourage the use of Filipino literary classics and prize-winning works as the basis for the movies to be entered in the new festival.

Details still have to be threshed out, but the plan should be supported, because it could lend greater substance and significance to our film productions, especially if backed up by the avid viewership of our students and teachers.

Still, the Metro Manila Film Festival cannot be permitted to become completely commercial, to the utter compromise of quality and values.

And it should resolve its current problems involving its selection of official entries soonest, so the viewing public and our film people don't completely give up on the film fest's ability to reform itself.

Feedback

CONCLUSION of **Jonathan Araullo's** letter: "TV people should realize that television and radio have the power to destroy or develop society. Any knowledgeable broadcaster knows (ask the media people who ran in the last elections) how the electronic media can influence not only individuals but the entire country—and the world. When this power is entrusted to an individual or company, they have the obligation to use it responsibly. Television and radio are expected to inform, to entertain and to educate, with *all* three aspects given equal time.

Third, if TV people think that entertainment should dominate their programming, its' time for the government and other sectors to re-think the ways and means of how frequencies are awarded to certain groups. Perhaps a commercial broadcasting system is not appropriate for our country.

"I am not suggesting that we scrap the commercial aspect of television, *but we should not leave it to advertisers to shape the broadcast industry.* We should find a balance where the broadcasting system can contribute significantly to nation-building, and at the same time be able to sustain itself.

"This is better than some groups primarily making money out of vital government property without paying rent, while exploiting what they think the people want."

Motorcade

THE STERLING Campus Idol singing search hits the road with a motorcade this Friday, Sept. 24. It starts at SM Harrison Plaza, goes past different schools in the University Belt area, and ends up at San Beda College, where live auditions will be held.

Sterling Campus Idol is presented by Sterling Notebook, Avanti Ballpen and Pentel Writing Instrument, and produced by DL Media Focus International. For details, call 886-4407.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

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send to 2333 for Globe
and 225 for Smart

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 FENG SHUI
10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 10:20
PG-13

2 BOURNE SUPREMACY
12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 10:00
R-13

3 THE TERMINAL
11:05, 2:00, 4:55, 7:50, 10:45
GP

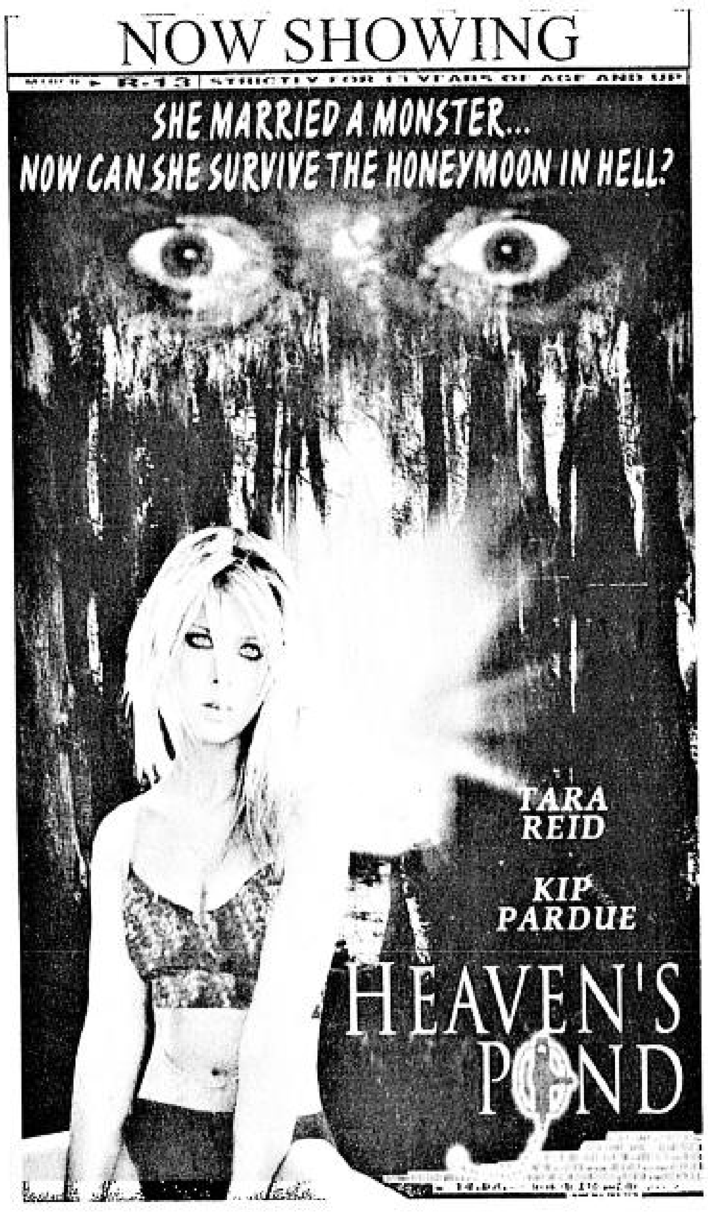
4 THE EXORCIST
11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:30
PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

SAVED **PG13** 1:50,4:00,6:10,8:20,10:30	**THE BOURNE SUPREMACY** **PG13** 12:00,2:15,4:30,6:45,9:00	**THE TERMINAL** **GP** 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30
FENG SHUI **PG13** 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	**EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING** **R13** 12:10,2:35,5:00,7:25,9:50	**THE BOURNE SUPREMACY** **PG13** 1:30,3:45,6:00,8:15,10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.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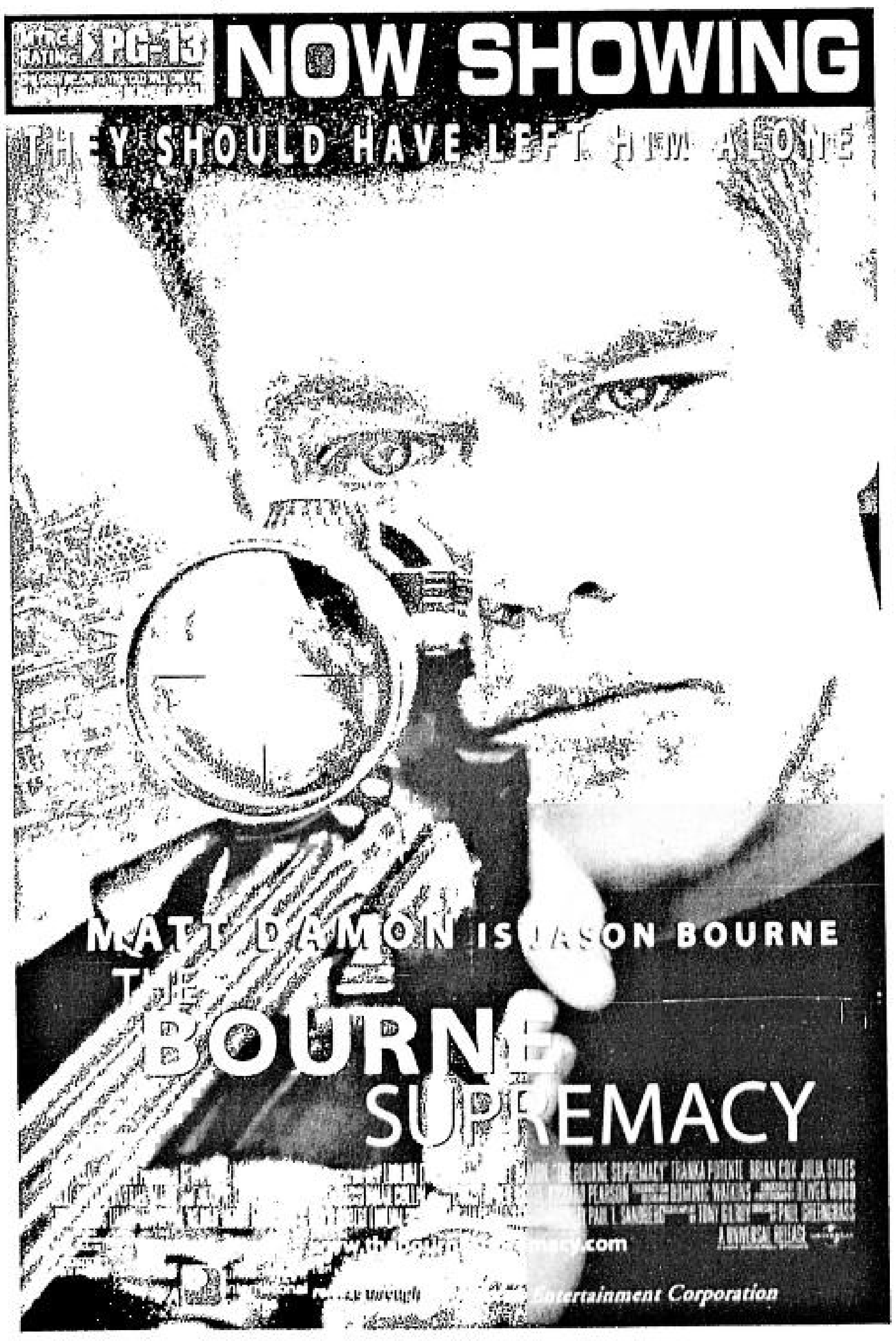
R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
SHE MARRIED A MONSTER...
NOW CAN SHE SURVIVE THE HONEYMOON IN HELL?
TARA REID
KIP PARDUE
HEAVEN'S POND


PG-13
NOW SHOWING
THEY SHOULD HAVE LEFT HIM ALONE
MATT DAMON IS JASON BOURNE
THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
www.thebournesupremacy.com
Entertainment Corporation

star group of cinemas movie guide

IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

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- Takaw Tingin
- Exorcist
- Feng Shui

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- Secretary
- Takaw Tingin
- Anacondas
- Feng Shui
- Bourne Supremacy
- Exorcist

starmall LAS PINAS
Tel. No. 873.50.04
- Feng Shui
- Takaw Tingin

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SERIES OF 2004

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 FENG SHUI
FS : 12 20PM, 2 45PM, 5.10PM, 7.35PM
LMF: 10 00PM (PG - 13)

2 BOURNE SUPREMACY
FS : 10 50AM, 1 05PM, 3 20PM, 5 35PM, 7 50PM
LMF: 10 05PM (PG - 13)

3 THE TERMINAL
FS : 12 40PM, 3 20PM, 6 00PM
LMF: 8 40PM (GP)

4 EXORCIST
FS : 11 45AM, 2 00PM, 4 15PM, 6 30PM,
LMF: 8 45PM (R - 13)

PREMIERE THEATRE — BOURNE SUPREMACY
FS : 12.35PM, 2 50PM, LMF : 5 05PM
(PG - 13)

For more information
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Shangri-La Plaza

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CINEMA 1 — **BOURNE SUPREMACY**
11:00 , 1:15 , 3:30 , 5:45 ,
8:00, 10:15
PG13

CINEMA 2 — **SAVED**
11:00 , 1:10 , 3:25 , 5:40 ,
7:55 , 10:10
PG13

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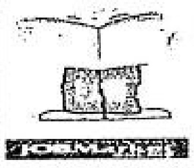
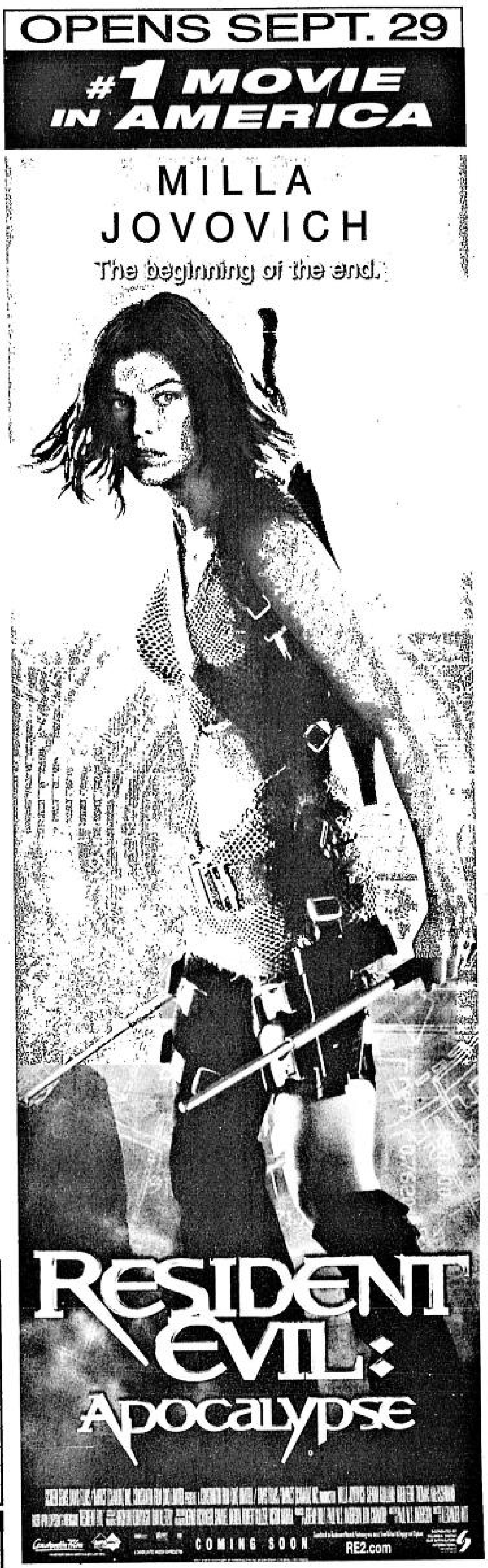


THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	[illegible]
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	TAKAW TINGIN
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	TAKAW TINGIN
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2,3 & 4	THE NOTEBOOK, THE TERMINAL, PRINCESS DIARIES 2, DODGEBAL.
PREMIERE THEATRE	ANACONDAS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MINDHUNTERS
CINEMA-2	TAKAW TINGIN
CINEMA-3	13 GOING ON 30
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BETTER THAN SEX (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-6	THE TERMINAL
CINEMA-7	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-8	HAUNTED SPIRIT 2
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SAVED
CINEMA-12	HEAVEN'S POND
CINEMA-14	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-15	FENG SHUI
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-1	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-2	DODGEBALL
CINEMA-4	[illegible]
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA


OPENS SEPT. 29
#1 MOVIE IN AMERICA
MILLA JOVOVICH
The beginning of the end.
RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
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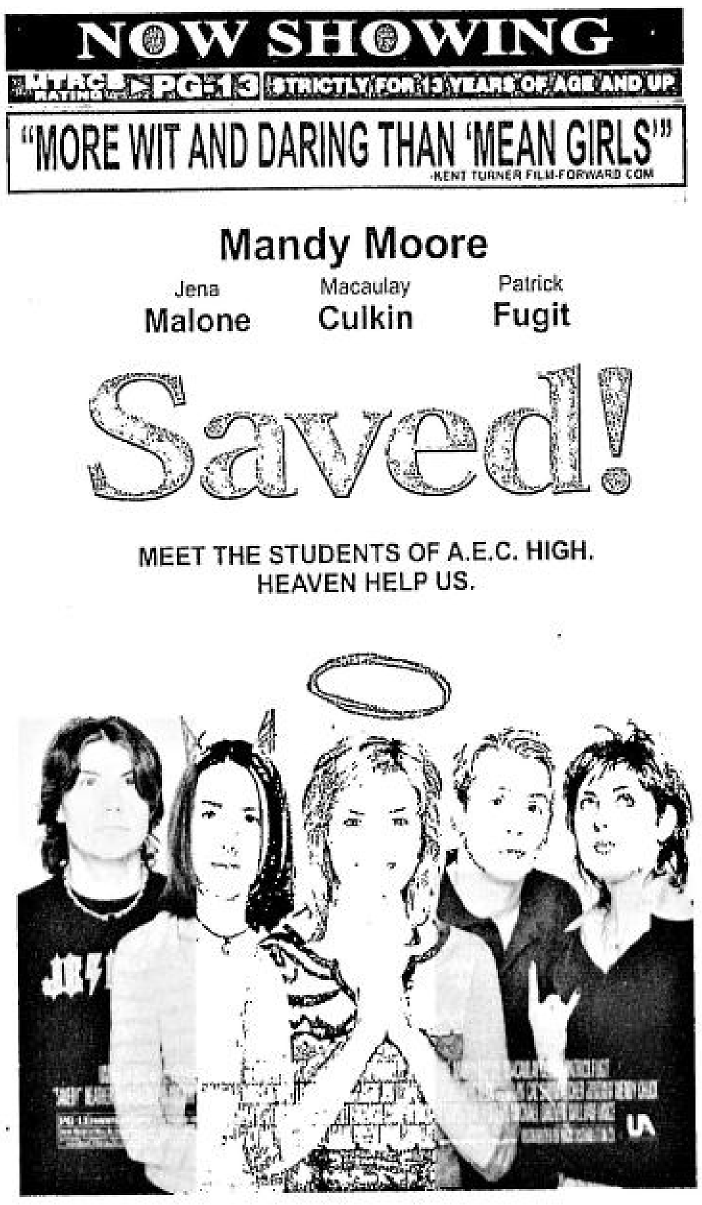
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GALLERIA 632-9115 to 16

CINEMA 1 THX THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
2 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
3 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
4 13 GOING ON 30 10:20, 12:40, 3:00; 5:20, 7:40, 10.00
5 FENG SHUI 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
6 HEAVEN'S POND 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10.00
7 SAVED 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
8 THE NOTEBOOK 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10.00
9 THE TERMINAL 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10.00
10 SECRETARY 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P80 for one level cinemas
Regulár Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 10:35; 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
2 SECRETARY 11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:20
3 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9.50
4 HEAVEN'S POND 10.30, 12:30, 2.30, 4.30, 6:30, 8:30, 10.00
5 13 GOING ON 30 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7.40, 9:50
6 FENG SHUI 10.35, 12.50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
7 SAVED 10:20, 12.15, 2:10, 4.05, 6:00, 7.55, 9.50

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1 HEAVEN'S POND 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2 SAVED 10:05, 12:15, 2:25, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00
3 13 GOING ON 30 10:50, 12.50, 2.50, 4.50, 6.50, 9.00
4 THE TERMINAL 10:10, 1.05, 4.00, 6:55, 9:10
5 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 11:20, 1:40, 4.00, 6.20, 8.35, 10:30
6 TAKAW TINGIN 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6.50, 9:00
7 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 10:35, 1.00, 3:25, 5.50, 8.15, 10:30
8 FENG SHUI 11:20, 1:40, 4.00, 6:20, 8.40, 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229 / 31
1 EXORCIST:THE BEGINNING
2 SAVED
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 THE TERMINAL
6 13 GOING ON 30
7 MINDHUNTERS
8 ANACONDAS

Citisquare **MALABON** 288-0985/2575
1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2 FENG SHUI
3 TAKAW TINGIN
4 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING

CAINTA 240-4661
1 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
2 FENG SHUI
3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
4 TAKAW TINGIN

LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870
1 THE TERMINAL
2 13 GOING ON 30
3 TAG-INIT
4 FENG SHUI
5 ANACONDAS

STA. ROSA (049)837-0907
1 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
2 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
3 THUNDERBIRDS
4 LAWS OF ATTRACTIONS
5 FENG SHUI

DASMARIÑAS 852-2125 / 416-4332
1 13 GOING ON 30
2 TWISTED
3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
4 MINDHUNTERS
5 FENG SHUI

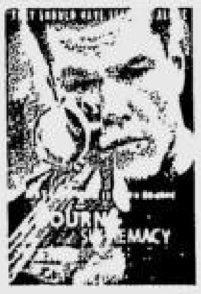
ANGELES
1 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2 FENG SHUI
3 LAWS OF ATTRACTION
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY

STARMILLS San Fernando, Pampanga 875-1927 / 961-5270
1 THE TOOL BOX MURDERS
2 TAG-INIT
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
6 MINDHUNTERS

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858
1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2 LAWS OF ATTRACTION
3 JANDARA
4 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
5 FENG SHUI
6 MINDHUNTERS

BACOLOD 441-0458/59
1 THE TERMINAL
2 FENG SHUI
3 DODGEBALL
4 THE ALAMO
5 ANACONDAS
6 HAMOG

ILOILO 336-8070/78
1 LAWS OF ATTRACTION
2 THE NOTEBOOK
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE TERMINAL
5 DODGEBALL
6 ANACONDAS



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AYALA CINEMAS THX
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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4		GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
THX 1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	1 FENG SHUI	5 THE NOTEBOOK	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 SAVED 2 35, 4 45, 6.55, 9 05, 11 15	1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2 SAVED	2 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING	2 SAVED	6 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 1 50, 4 00, 6 10, 8 20, 10 30	2 THE NOTEBOOK
3 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING	3 HEAVEN'S POND	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 EXORCIST 12 50, 3 15, 5.40, 8 05, 10 30	7 THE TERMINAL	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING 2 15, 4 40, 7 95, 9 30	3 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
4 THE TERMINAL		4 13 GOING ON 30		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 FENG SHUI 2 10, 4 30, 6 50, 9 10, 11 30	4 FENG SHUI
		GB1 GREENBELT 1			
5 FENG SHUI	4 FENG SHUI	1 SAVED 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9.45 2 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 12 50, 3 00, 5 10, 7 20, 9 30		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE TERMINAL 1 30, 4 00, 6 30 9 00 11 30	5 THE TERMINAL

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
BPI APPLIANCE MADNESS September 9 to 26, 2004	PHILIPPINE ROBOTICS OLYMPIA September 24 TOWN CHEERS CHEERING COMPETITION September 25 and 26	CEBU MEDICAL SOCIETY'S MEDICINE WEEK September 21 to 24, 2004

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GREENBELT 2	GREENBELT 3
GREENBELT 2: MUSIC STYLES featuring THE REAL GROOVE September 23, 7:00 to 10:00pm	NEO CORPO ART EXHIBIT Sept. 16-30 (Greenbelt 3 Lobby)

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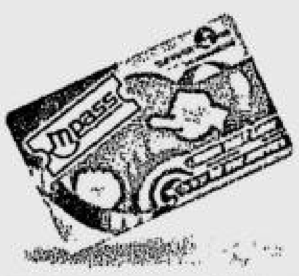

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VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Properly handled festival can do wonders

SOME of our movie people are dissatisfied with the selection process of the Metro Manila Film Festival. They accuse the film fest of breaking its own rules, favoring certain influential producers, and watering down the annual festival's avowed criteria of excellence.

We have been making the same points for a long time now. We're concerned because we've seen how the festival, if properly handled, can have such a great impact for good on the movie industry and its viewers alike.

We recall the very first Manila Film Festival put up decades ago under the aegis of then Manila Mayor **Antonio Villegas.**

Before the festival was organized, the Filipino movie industry was in dire straits, because only around three theaters were screening local films. Filipino movies were generally being viewed only by the so-called "*bakya* crowd," and most other viewers were patronizing Hollywood imports.

Happily, the first Manila Film Festival opened the viewing public's eyes to the creditable products of the local film industry.

Viewers were pleasantly surprised to see that they were imaginative movies of good quality, contrary to the then prevailing notion that Filipino films were mostly quickie and cheapie productions.

Moviegoers were particularly impressed with local movies' good use of color, thanks to the innovative work of Nepomuceno Productions and other pioneers in this field.

It's no exaggeration to say that the first Manila Film Festival turned the local movie industry's fortunes around. Soon after the filmfest, non-*bakya* moviegoers began to regularly patronize local films, and more theaters agreed to screen Filipino productions.

Our movie people benefited .from this upbeat development, to the point that local movies upstaged Hollywood films in popularity and box-office grosses.

Unfortunately, this wonderful advantage has been frittered away. After the Manila film fest gave way to the bigger Metro Manila Film Festival, the year-end film fest has lowered its quality standards, and has generally become simply a moneymaking event for various film

PROPERLY/ A26

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino
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GMA 7 axes Phoemela from 'Extra Challenge'

By Marinel R. Cruz

GMA 7 has "prematurely" ended its talent contract with "Extra Challenge" co-host Phoemela Barranda because "certain provisions" in the contract have not been met.

GMA Network head of publicity for news and public affairs Jayce Perlas confirmed this to INQUIRER Entertainment last Tuesday. Perlas, however, refused to say which contract requirements Phoemela failed to meet.

A GMA 7 insider said the provisions in Phoemela's contract do not concern her commercial endorsements or ramp modeling jobs, but "a bad habit."

Phoemela's talent contract with GMA 7 is scheduled to expire this month, the model-TV host told INQUIRER Entertainment in a telephone interview.

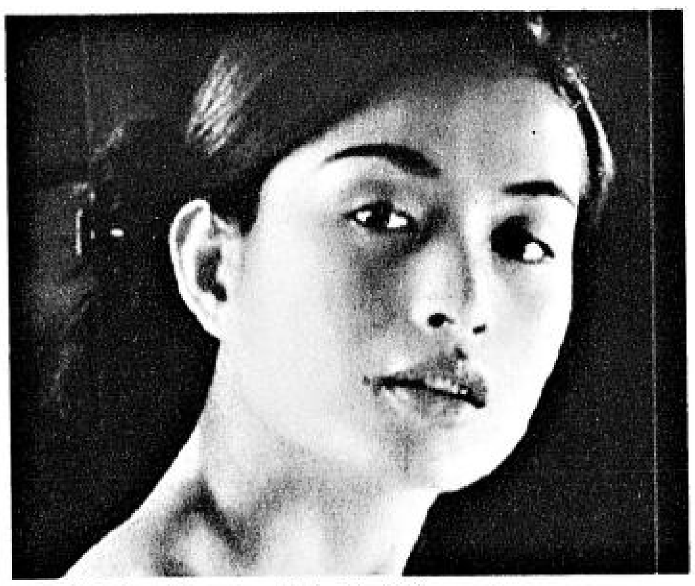
Phoemela also did not want to comment on the issue, saying "it is a legal matter." She referred INQUIRER Entertainment to her manager, Jing Monis, who is now in New York City.

Phoemela has been getting good reviews as Paolo Bediones' "new partner" when GMA 7 decided to terminate her talent contract. But she said there is no bad blood between her and GMA 7.

She said she wanted to "pass the opportunity (of hosting 'Extra Challenge') to other girls," and at the same time "accept other offers."

Phoemela won the "Kapalit" competition for a new co-host for "Extra Challenge" last December 2003. She competed a la "Fear Factor" with former beauty queen Joanna Peñalosa, cable host Reema Chanco, former beauty queen and host Josephine Canonizado and sexy comedian Ethel Booba to fill the slot vacated by Miriam Quiambao.

Phoemela hosts "Extra Challenge" with "Texter's Choice" winner Ethel Booba.



BARRANDA out because of "a bad habit."

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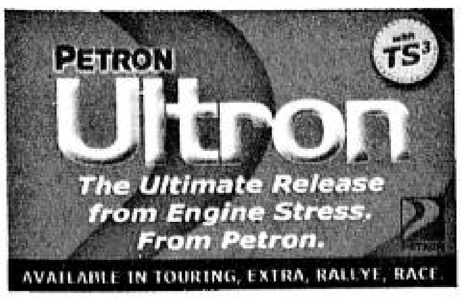
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ADB raises RP growth forecast to 5.5%

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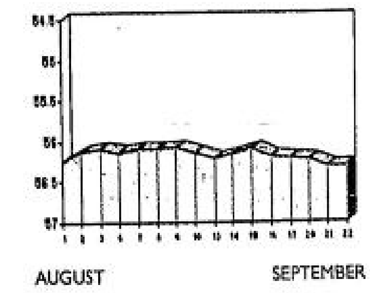

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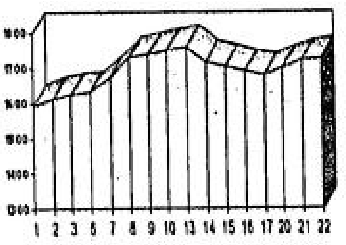
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end higher for 3rd day



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS rose yesterday as the central bank signaled it wanted to fuel economic growth by not matching a hike in US interest rates.

Analysts said investors snapped up favored blue chips like second-ranked mobile phone firm Globe Telecom Inc., top property firm Ayala Land Inc. and leading mall developer SM Prime Holdings Inc.

Telecom stocks have been favored due to expectations the sector will continue to benefit from huge demand for mobile phones, while many analysts said the property sector is now coming out of a prolonged slump.

The central bank said yesterday it remained comfortable with US interest rates after the US Federal Open Market Committee raised its benchmark rates by 25 basis points to 1.75 percent, adding to similar increases in June and August.

The Bangko Sentral n Pilipinas has not touched its benchmark rates since a cut of 25 basis points in July 2003 that matched a similar move by the Fed. The bank's overnight borrowing rate is 6.75 percent and its lending rate is 9 percent.

"This is good for the market. Despite inflationary pressures due to rising oil prices, the central bank wants to keep the economy strong," said AB Capital economic analyst Jose Vistan.

The main stock index rose 0.42 percent or 7.2 points to 1,727.88 points, even as losers beat gainers 43 to 37. The index is up 19.8 percent this year, making it one of the top performers in Asia. *Reuters*

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank yesterday upgraded its economic growth outlook for the Philippines for this year and 2005, but warned that the country would be among the Asian countries likely to suffer the worst from the skyrocketing oil prices.

In its semi-annual Asian Development Outlook, the bank projected that the domestic economy would grow by 5.5 percent this year and next year, up from 5-percent projection during the last assessment in April.

The upward revision was prompted by the higher-than-expected 6.3-percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) in the first half of the year, which was driven by strong consumer spending.

But the Philippines is still seen among the laggards in Southeast Asia this year, along with Indonesia and Cambodia, which are forecast to grow this year by 4.8 and 4.5 percent.

"Indonesia and the Philippines, while performing well, are performing below their potentials," said ADB's chief economist Ifzal Ali.

"Vietnam is the stellar performer in the next two years, followed by Singapore, while Thailand will continue to do well. Malaysia has also rebounded significantly," he said.

Among the group of 10 countries comprising developing Asia, the bank also said Thailand and the Philippines would be the worst hit by rising oil prices. Others that were expected to be severely affected included mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

It noted that the most vulnerable economies were those highly dependent on oil imports and were less energy efficient than most industrial countries. The bank said there was a need to phase out fuel subsidies and adopt measures to encourage the more efficient use of oil, such as providing tax incentives to develop and use alternative renewable energy sources.

"Selective measures to bring down oil consumption in the short run may be required," it said.

Overall, the bank has jacked up its economic growth forecast for Southeast Asia to 6.2 percent this year and 5.7 percent next year, from the earlier outlook of 5.7 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively.

Vietnam is seen growing by 7.5 percent this year and in 2005, and Singapore, by 8.1 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively.

On the other hand, Thailand is expected to grow 6.4 percent and 6.6 percent this year and next while Malaysia is seen growing by 6.8 percent and 6 percent.

In the case of the Philippines, the ADB said that achieving early consensus on reforms was critical. Despite the stronger growth expected, he warned of the ad-

ADB/ B2

REVENUE COLLECTION

Gov't agencies miss targets

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government is being urged to strictly monitor the revenue-collection performance of government agencies amid the country's lingering fiscal problem.

According to the National Tax Research Center, an attached agency of the Department of Finance tasked to conduct revenue-related studies, there were quite a number of agencies that have been under-performing in terms of collecting revenue for the government.

"Attention should be called of agencies among the Top 50 collectors who have not met their collection targets," the NTRC said in a performance report on the collection of government agencies submitted to the Department of Finance.

The collections being expected from government agencies consisted of the revenue coming from service fees and charges they get from the public.

NTRC said the government agencies that failed to reach their collection targets by the biggest margins during the first semester of 2004 included the Department of Energy, the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Labor and Employment, and the Energy Regulatory Commission.

The DOE only collected P106.14 million compared with its P1.16-billion target. CHED only collected P30 million compared with its P117-million target. The DFA collected only P421 million versus a target of P1.2 billion. DOLE collected only P39.89 million against a target of P93.74 million. Lastly, ERC collected only P43.52 million compared with its P78.57-million target.

SMC allots ₱15B for local expansion

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) will set aside P15 billion starting this year until 2006 for local expansion projects.

"This consistent focus to grow our home market reflects SMC's continuing confidence in the Philippine economy," Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr., SMC chair and chief executive officer said in a statement.

A significant portion of SMC's expansion will be in the countryside, helping generate employment and livelihood particularly in the rural areas. Sources said the expansion would be financed through existing cash and credit lines.

SMC is scheduled to inaugurate this year its Pure Foods Hormel Plant in Cavite as well as

SMC/ B2

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iBank plans to beef up capital through tier-2 route

By Doris C. Dumlao

INTERNATIONAL Exchange Bank, which is set to debut on the Philippine Stock Exchange this December, plans to further beef up its equity after its initial public offering using subordinated debt or the so-called tier-2 capital.

"The capital market is an integral part of our expansion plan," iBank executive vice president Antonio Moncupa Jr. said in a press briefing yesterday.

He said proceeds from the IPO and the succeeding tier-2 capital-raising would allow the bank to take advantage of expansion opportunities that would be available in the future.

The bank is set to offer 4.42 to 8.35 million primary common shares, representing 15-25 percent of its post-IPO capital, at a price range of P16 to P19 each. The offering will allow the bank to raise between P71 million and P159 million in fresh funds. The stocks will have a par value of P10.

He said the proceeds would allow the bank to accelerate the expansion of its operations and achieve significant profit growth.

The bank plans to increase its branch network from the current 71 to as much as 120. As the BSP has imposed a moratorium on branch expansion, however, the way to achieve this expansion is either to buy branches of banks closed by Philippine Deposit Insurance Co., buy the excess branches of other banks or acquire another bank.

Its preferred route, however, is to grow organically. Meanwhile, other expansion initiatives included the upgrade of its information technology architecture, continuous career development and productivity enhancement programs for its employees.

The PSE is currently processing the listing application covering the bank's common shares. The issue and lead manager is ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc.

But since raising capital through additional equity is more expensive than borrowing, the bank plans to raise tier-2 capital by next year.

iBank president Ramon Sy said the bank had yet to decide how much to raise from tier-2 capital, but the offering would most likely be in the form of peso instruments.

Even without the tier-2 capital, however, Moncupa said the bank had a capital adequacy ratio of about 14 percent, higher than the minimum of 10 percent prescribed by the BSP.

Since its opening as a full-service commercial bank in September 1995, the bank has achieved robust growth by focusing on the needs of the middle market, transactional deposit customers and large and medium-sized investors for its distribution of fixed income.

Sy said iBank was now the biggest bank organized after the banking sector was liberalized and was now even bigger than most of the older banks.

The bank's total assets amounted to P43.9 billion as of end-2003 compared to P14.4 billion as of end-1996. As of the same period, its deposits stood at P43.9 billion.

Although the bank can qualify to become a universal bank once it lists on the stock exchange, Sy said the bank planned to stick to its core banking competencies.

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SMC allots ₱15B for local expansion

From page B1

two Pure Foods' facilities in Batangas—a flour mill and flour blending facility.

SMC is also putting up feed mill plants in Bataan and Misamis Oriental, a broiler farm in Bulacan as well as hog farms in Bukidnon and Tarlac where it is also setting up a pet food plant and a veterinary medicine facility.

SMC will likewise establish an industrial park in Laguna, and the complex will host its manufacturing plants for value-added food products.

Cojuangco said roughly P5 billion will be spent for these food projects alone over the next three years.

SMC is also pursuing highly integrated agro-industrial zones as its growth model. Once in full operation, these zones, which are near abundant sources of raw materials, will link with SMC's manufacturing and distribution channels that are being reengineered to ensure the lowest possible cost for the company's products.

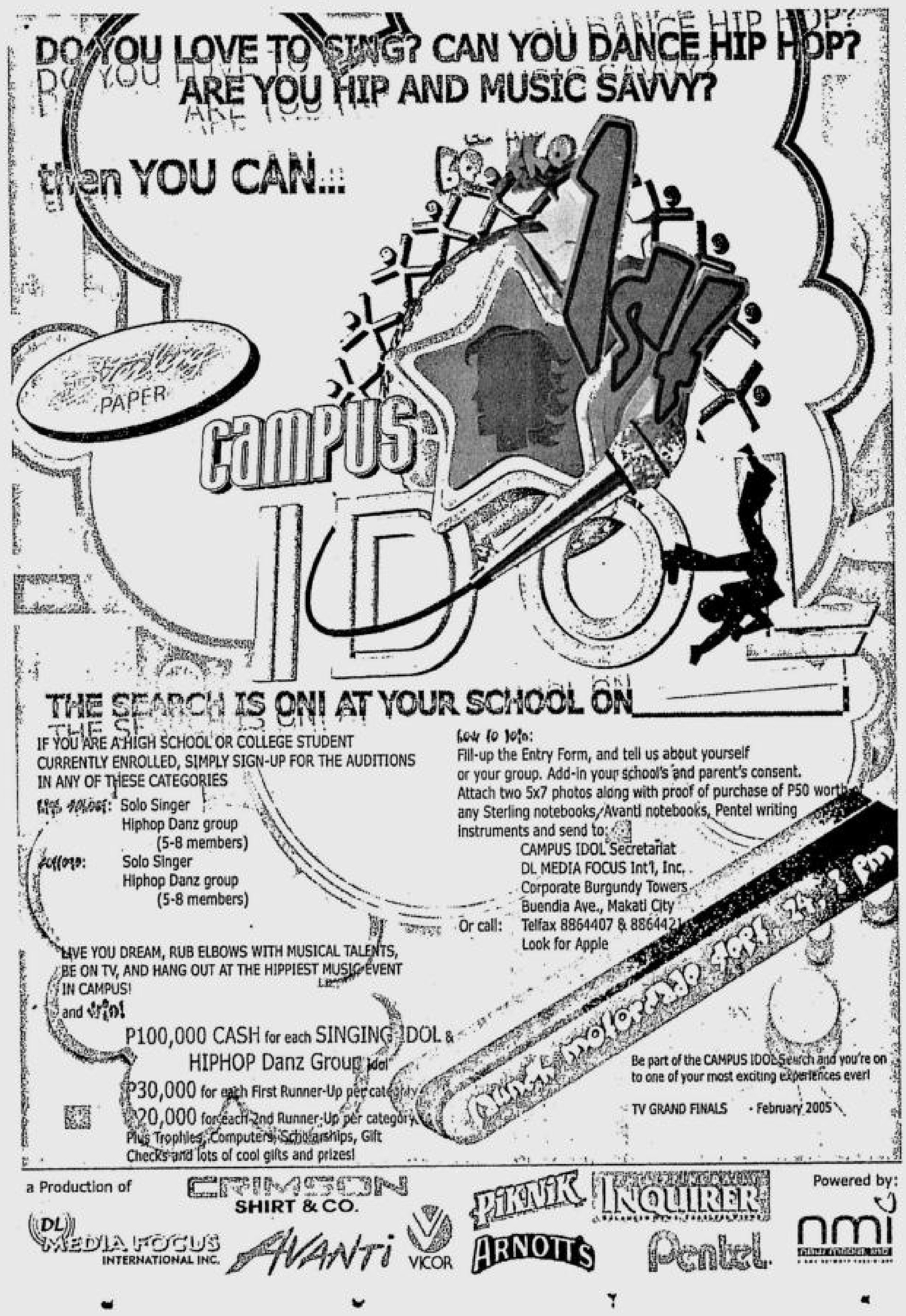
SMC will also invest "billions" to take advantage of the expected growth in beverage consumption.

SMC is expanding and modernizing its breweries in Polo, Valenzuela, and in San Fernando, Pampanga.

In Negros Occidental, SMC will expand the capacity of Distileria Bago, a hard liquor plant operated by Ginebra San Miguel Inc.

Site development, meanwhile, is nearing completion for another alcohol distillery at an industrial site in Misamis Oriental.

"These particular expansion projects are growth platforms that will boost San Miguel's export earnings capability particularly from liquor. They will also contribute substantially in our raw material import substitution and help save foreign exchange for the country," Cojuangco said in a statement.



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From page B1

verse impact of a huge budget deficit, larger public sector debt and high unemployment rate on top of external shocks such as increases in global oil prices and interest rates.

The report also lamented that the robust economic growth failed to generate more jobs for the growing workforce, as indicated by the rising unemployment and underemployment.

The bank said the attainment of its more bullish growth forecasts for the Philippines this year and next would depend on key reform programs.

"While some analysts have disputed the President's 'fiscal crisis' assertion (on the basis of a technical definition related to the country's current capacity to pay debts and access international capital markets, the central point is the government's clear recognition of the need for action to prevent an already precarious fiscal position from worsening," the report said.

It also warned of the government's vulnerability to high levels of contingent liabilities, primarily for underwriting the finances of government-owned and -controlled corporations, government financial institutions and the public pension fund system.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 22, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	43,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45	45	45	45	1,423,100
China Banking Corp.	530	530	530	530	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	3,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28.5	29	28	28	328,300
Philippine National Bank	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	1,500
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	47,000
Security Bank Corp.	21	21.25	21	21.25	17,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.75	24.75	24.5	24.5	6,200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	166	166	166	166	150
Manulife Financial Corp.	2430	2450	2430	2440	890
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.34	260,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	119	119	119	119	30
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1610	1625	1610	1625	1,100
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	20.75	20.75	20.5	20.75	63,300
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.67	1,710,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1060	1095	1060	1085	132,510
Ipeople Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	15,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.055	25,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.4	2.42	2.4	2.42	20,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	6,279,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1335	1355	1330	1330	77,050
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.66	0.64	0.65	2,140,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	2,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.25	15.75	15.25	15.25	31,300
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	23.5	23	23.5	1,022,300
Petron Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.75	521,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	50,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	464,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.46	630,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	27,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	89,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.37	0.39	0.37	0.38	1,300,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.34	2.48	2.34	2.38	6,411,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.85	2.9	2.85	2.9	45,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	2,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26	26.5	26	26.5	191,800
RFM Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	120,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	70,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58.5	57.5	58.5	287,200
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	69.5	69.5	69.5	3,900
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100,000
Universal Robina Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	5,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	24,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	5,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.4	25,263,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.4	3.45	3.35	3.35	142,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.031	2,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	69,000
APC Group Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	102,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.64	1.6	1.64	162,000
ATN Holdings Inc. B	1.66	1.66	1.62	1.62	50,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1	1	1	1	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	14	14.5	13.5	14.5	201,100
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.59	0.56	0.57	4,440,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	370,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,500,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.155	1,900,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.26	2.32	2.18	2.18	6,802,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.036	0.036	0.035	0.035	4,100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26.5	27	26.5	27	528,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	3,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.18	2.24	2.16	2.16	710,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	7,068,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.6	1.6	360,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.18	1.18	1,750,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.51	0.51	35,790,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	750,000
Roxas Holdings, Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	100,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	10,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	11,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.155	0.155	1,660,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	5,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.78	1.78	192,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.065	0.065	1,800,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.69	2,570,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	500,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.62	0.62	2,240,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.2	3.25	3.1	3.1	270,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	21	21	21	21	436,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	5,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	18,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.3	6.6	6.3	6.4	11,724,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	820,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.43	0.46	0.43	0.44	11,650,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.145	0.15	900,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	10,250,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	30,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	4,340,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.215	0.23	0.215	0.225	8,080,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.94	2	1.94	2	59,000
SM Development Corp.	1	1	1	1	3,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	27,534,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	20,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3	3	2.95	2.95	27,000
Benguet Corp. A	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	20,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	540,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	58,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.017	45,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	125,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	60,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	40,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	4,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.7	36,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	240,000

DISCLOSURES

KEPPEL Philippines Marine Inc. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Nov. 10, 8:30 a.m. at the KPH Boardroom, Country Space I Building, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Oct. 22 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED officers of **Far Eastern University** were Lourdes Montinola, chair; Aurelio Montinola III, vice chair; Lydia Echauz, president; Angelina Jose, corporate secretary; Fe Canilao, chief financial officer; Lydia Palaypay, vice president-academic affairs; Ceferino Sta. Maria, vice president-operations; Herminia Maliwat, treasurer; Glenn Nagal, comptroller; Cecilia Anido, AVP-academic affairs; Renato Silva, AVP-operations and Severino Garcia, compliance officer.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. disclosed the purchase by company chair, Manuel Pangilinan, of 10,455 PLDT shares at P1,330 each. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

September 22, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.810504	1.000000	56.2950
Japan	Yen	0.007389	0.009117	0.5132
United Kingdom	Pound	1.457205	1.797900	101.2128
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.103921	0.128218	7.2180
Switzerland	Franc	0.646490	0.797639	44.9031
Canada	Dollar	0.629616	0.776820	43.7311
Singapore	Dollar	0.480071	0.592312	33.3442
Australia	Dollar	0.568176	0.701016	39.4637
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.149993	2.652661	149.3316
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.216135	0.266667	15.0120
Brunei	Dollar	0.478654	0.590563	33.2457
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000090	0.000111	0.0062
Thailand	Baht	0.019634	0.024225	1.3637
UAE	Dirham	0.220678	0.272272	15.3276
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.233800	69.4568
Argentina	Peso	0.269943	0.333056	18.7494
Brazil	Real	0.282209	0.348189	19.6013
Denmark	Kroner	0.134452	0.165887	9.3386
India	Rupee	0.017692	0.021829	1.2289
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213296	0.263165	14.8149
Mexico	New Peso	0.071037	0.087646	4.9340
New Zealand	Dollar	0.536154	0.661507	37.2395
Norway	Kroner	0.118677	0.146424	8.2429
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013766	0.016984	0.9561
South Africa	Rand	0.125855	0.155280	8.7415
Korea	Won	0.000708	0.000873	0.0491
Sweden	Kroner	0.110504	0.136340	7.6753
Syria	Pound	0.022433	0.027678	1.5581
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023916	0.029507	1.0611
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000423	0.000522	0.0294

DOF puts P91.9-B budget deficit cap on 14 GOCCs

By Michelle V. Remo

HOPING to inject fiscal discipline into state-owned firms, the Department of Finance put a cap on the combined budget deficit of the 14 monitored government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) for next year.

The 14 monitored GOCCs were directed to post a combined budget deficit of P91.86 billion in 2005, 27 percent lower than the P125.51-billion budget gap expected of them this year.

The monitored GOCCs include the following: National Power Corp., National Food Authority, Light Rail Transit Authority, Home Guaranty Corp., National Housing Authority, Manila International Airport Authority, Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Philippine National Oil Co., Philippine Ports Authority, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, National Development Co., Local Water Utilities Administration, National Electrification Administration and National Irrigation Administration.

The DOF monitors these firms due mainly to their heavy losses, especially Napocor.

For this year, Napocor's expected budget deficit of P80.346 billion was more than half of the P125.51-billion combined budget deficit of the monitored GOCCs.

Following Napocor was the National Food Authority with P10.640 billion, and the Light Rail Transit Authority with P9.016 billion.

For next year, the government wants Napocor's budget deficit lowered to only P59.736 billion (including that of Transmission Corp. and Power Sector Asset and Liabilities Management Corp.).

The expected lower deficit was partly attributed to the recent and coming power rate hikes.

The budget deficits of NFA and LRTA were projected to be reduced to only P13.525 billion and P6.995 billion, respectively.

LRTA expects its budget deficit to be reduced partly by the expected approval of its request for fare hike.

State-owned companies are under fire for contributing to the heavy fiscal burden borne by the already financially troubled national government.

Of the P5.9-trillion public sector debt last year, the national government accounted for P3.4 trillion, and over P2.5 trillion was contributed by the debts of state-owned firms.

While the national government had a bigger share, a substantial amount of its borrowings were intended to bail out GOCCs.

The government outlined several measures to cushion the adverse impact of the GOCCs' finances on the national government.

These include the removal of the automatic guarantees of the national government on borrowings of GOCCs and putting a cap on the salaries of GOCC officials.

DTI accredits 1st certification body

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry's Bureau of Product Standards has accredited SGS Philippines Inc. as an environmental management system (EMS) testing and certification agency.

The accreditation means SGS Philippines Inc. can now conduct testing on and issue certification to companies wishing to get ISO 14001 or the EMS quality check.

SGS Philippines can now check the adequacy of the EMS compliance of a company's production system based on local and international environmental laws before they can be issued ISO 14001.

The system of environmental audit for those companies seeking ISO 14001 include checking the company's pollution control and control of hazardous chemicals.

The ISO 14001 certificates to be issued by SGS will provide the necessary credibility, added value and recognition that will make it easier for certified companies to sell their products or promote their services in other countries since the system is aligned with international standards. Moreover, the accreditation scheme assures consumers that the products and services they are buying from companies certified by accredited CBs meet standard requirements.

DTI-BPS director Jesus L. Motoomull said SGS Philippines was the first certification body accredited for ISO 14001.

"With this development, more companies will be encouraged to apply for ISO 14001 certification," he said.

Behold me...
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Dr. RICHARD S. WELLINS
Senior Vice President for Global Marketing
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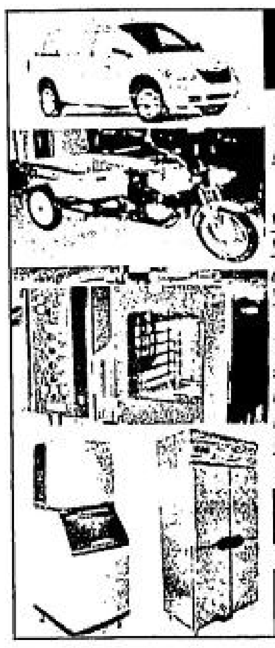

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Asia shares dip on Japan fears

SINGAPORE—Asian shares dipped on Wednesday amid concern about the strength of Japan's recovery, while the dollar languished after a widely expected US interest rate increase.

Lackluster Japanese trade data helped push the Nikkei down 0.6 percent to a one-month closing low of 11,019.41.

Electronics companies were among the biggest losers, including Toshiba Corp., which fell 1.5 percent.

The benchmark 10-year Japanese government bond (JGB) reflected fears the Japanese export-led recovery was faltering.

Yields dipped 1.5 basis points to a four-month low of 1.460 percent, before returning to previous levels.

"Clearly, the Japanese economy has already peaked, even though some people still say it will remain strong," said Tadashi Kikugawa, head of JGB trading at Morgan Stanley.

The MSCI index of Asian share markets outside Japan fell 0.1 percent, and its technology component declined one percent.

South Korea's index dropped 2.6 percent as investors interpreted central bank comments as meaning an expected rate cut would be delayed.

The central bank pledged preemptive steps should rising inflation threaten already weak consumer spending.

Profit-taking was also a factor for some recent gainers.

Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., the world's biggest maker of memory chips, slipped 2.4 percent, and Hynix Semiconductor Inc. fell 4.5 percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index fell 0.1 and Singapore's Straits Times Index dropped 0.4 percent.

Australia was a bright spot. Stocks resumed a record-breaking run, reaching a new high as mining firms rose on the back of higher base metal prices.

The benchmark S&P/ASX 200 index rose 0.4 percent to a record 3,644.3 before easing back a bit. *Reuters*

THIRD FOR THE YEAR

US Fed raises interest rates

WASHINGTON—The US Federal Reserve on Tuesday raised interest rates for the third time this year by a quarter of a percentage point and said the economy was regaining momentum, signaling at least one more to come.

The widely expected and unanimous decision by the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee moves the benchmark federal funds rate—which influences credit costs throughout the economy—to 1.75 percent from 1.5 percent.

The central bank lifted short-term rates by matching amounts at its policy sessions in June and on Aug. 10, ending a long period of super-low borrowing costs.

Many economists expect a fourth rise at the next meeting on Nov. 10, about a week after the US presidential elections.

"After moderating earlier this year partly in response to the substantial rise in energy prices, output growth appears to have regained some traction, and labor market conditions have improved modestly," the Fed said in a statement outlining its decision, which also increased the largely symbolic discount rate to 2.75 percent.

The Fed also said inflation pressures and expectations had eased despite a rise in energy costs.

It said risks to the US economy remained balanced between weaker growth and higher prices and repeated a pledge to undertake a "measured" course of rate increases.

Analysts said the Fed, with its carefully couched language, seemed to be keeping its options open on whether to steadily ratchet rates up or take a pause if economic data weaken.

A Reuters poll of 22 top Wall Street bond dealers found all agreed the Fed would boost interest rates a further quarter percentage point in November.

At that point, 15 dealers think the Fed will hold at 2 percent through the end of the year while seven predicted another quarter percentage point hike at the eighth and final policy-setting session on Dec. 14.

One concern this year is that a soft pace of job creation and higher energy prices have put strain on consumers, who were the main support for a teetering US economy in the slow recovery from the 2001 recession. Retail sales fell in August.

Some economists believe the softness may persist and that the rate-rise cycle is near an end. *Reuters*

Special PROJECT

74th National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

MESSAGES

I JOIN the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in celebrating their 74th National Day.

The consolidation and foundation of the Kingdom by King Abdul Aziz (Ibn Saud) in 1932 is indeed a very important event. It marked the creation of a great, prosperous and united nation that is a bastion of progress in the Middle East. Today, the Kingdom is a key player in the world's economy, a partner in the growth of developing nations, as well as a force for understanding among peoples of all faiths.

I take pride in the friendship and close cooperation that have persisted between our governments and peoples these many years. You continue to be gracious hosts to our many overseas workers, who in turn have ably contributed to the development and industrialization of the Kingdom. Our bilateral relations in trade and industry, and our common stand on important international concerns, remain as consistent and strong as ever.

I therefore have no other wish than for this celebration to bring forth greater progress in the Kingdom and a deeper sense of brotherhood and partnership between Filipinos and the Saudi people. On behalf of the entire Filipino nation, I extend my regard to the people of Saudi Arabia, and wish you all a joyful and meaningful celebration!

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

ON THE 9th Sha'ban 1425H corresponding to Sept. 23, 2004, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia celebrates its National Day. It is the 74th (based on the Hegirah calendar) celebration of a momentous event in its history, proclaiming the unification of the different tribes of the Kingdom under the leadership of King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman • Al-Saud (May the blessings of Allah be upon him).

On this day in 1351H (1932), Arab history recorded the birth of this state with supremacy, power and dignity in the land of the Arab peninsula. This wide and vast state adopted all means of development and achieved stability and progress, and made the Holy Book of the Generous Allah and the Hadith of His Messenger Mohammad (Peace be upon him) as its constitution and way of life.

After more than 70 years of statehood and adopting a series of five-year development plan that started in 1970 and now the end-year of the 7th Plan, Saudi Arabia has achieved remarkable developments. The fact is that development in the Kingdom has not only been about building roads, airports, seaports, factories, water desalination plants, electricity, telecommunications networks and plants, but equally, if not more importantly, it has been about improving the well being of the Saudi people and enhancing their capabilities by providing them better education and health services, a cleaner environment, etc.

The past six five-year plans, emphasis were on economic growth, development of human resources and diversification of the economy to reduce dependence on oil. However, the seventh Plan was formulated with the resolve to face the new challenges, such as fast rate of growth of population, unemployment, the need for speeding economic diversification, privatization, and due attention to the need of continuous expansion and maintenance of infrastructure. It also includes reforms of the administrative and financial setup, and restructuring of government services to raise the efficiency of delivering services. Another major theme in the plan is strengthening the development of technology and informatics through the build-up of a national science and technology base, considering the fact that growth has become increasingly tied to the level of financial growth.

As the 7th Plan is ending this year, the process of planning in Saudi Arabia is now entering a new stage characterized by greater emphasis on expanding private sector's role, increasing reliance on indicative planning with longer time horizon-up to 20 years, again, continuous emphasis in human resources development, and increasing emphasis in science and technology as the global economy shifts to knowledge-based economy.

Shifting to a new gear, the Saudi-Philippines relations is more than ever getting stronger everyday. Every new day, some 300 OFWs arrive in the Kingdom, joining the almost 1 million Filipinos who made Saudi Arabia their second home. Since 1973, millions of Filipino workers have worked in the Kingdom. Some hundred thousands of them have been returnees or keep coming back after their contracts had finished. Many have invited their immediate families, relatives and friends to join them in Saudi Arabia. Some find not only livelihood but peace and tranquility in Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the humanitarian concern of the Saudi leadership regardless of race or religion, was demonstrated by the assistance extended by HRH Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz to the Filipino Siamese twins who were successfully separated in Saudi Arabia. Eight-month-old Princess Ann and Princess Mae Manzo were joined at the abdomen and pelvis and shared lower organs. They flew to Saudi early this year and were separated in March after a marathon 20-hour operation. The surgery by a 48-man medical team cost $320,000 and was paid by the Crown Prince. Saudi Arabia's medical expertise in separating conjoined twins is considered to be among the best in the world. Eight sets of twins have been successfully separated recently. The Crown Prince has instructed the Saudi Arabian Embassy to continue looking after Princess Ann and Princess Mae. The twins along with their parents were received by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in Malacanang on July 7. The President said the gesture of His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Abdullah, serves as a living symbol of the close relationships between the Philippines and Saudi Arabia as well as the sincere friendship between the peoples of the two countries.

The average total trade between our two countries is more than $1 billion a year with oil importation getting the bigger chunk. We do hope that the Philippines, like its Asian neighbors, should get a bigger share in the Saudi import market. The presence of a big number of OFWs in the Kingdom will not only be a market of Philippine products, but they could also promote the products to the Saudi market.

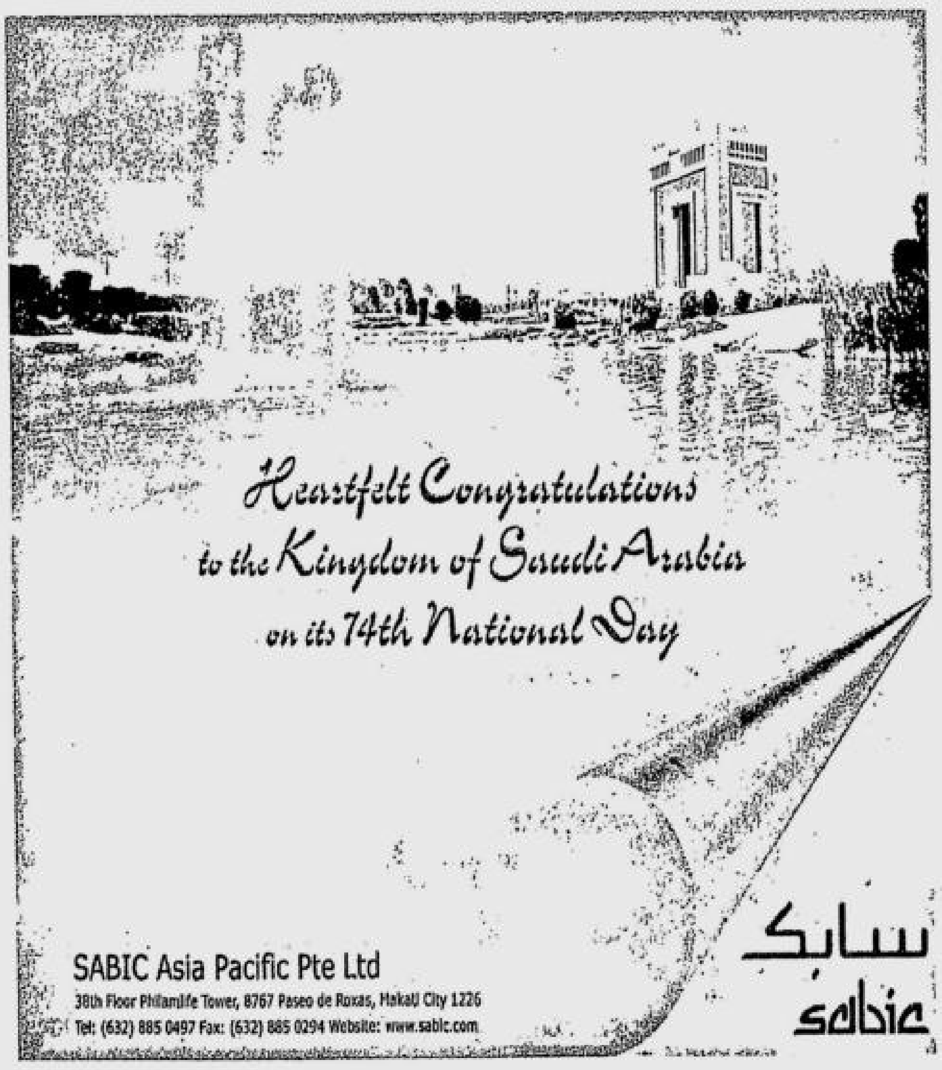
The partnership of the PNOC and the Saudi Aramco in the Petron wherein the Saudi Aramco bought 40 percent of Petron in 1993 for $540 million has been beneficial to both parties. Aside from the profitability of the venture, the Philippines is guaranteed a continuous flow of the Saudi oil through Petron.

Lastly, we welcome and wholeheartedly support the resumption of the GRP-MILF peace negotiations with prayers that that it will result to a lasting peace to Mindanao and that development and prosperity for all sectors will take place.

We extend also our congratulations to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for her triumphant state visit to China, and wishing her good health and more success in the forthcoming Apec meeting in Chile.

Wassalam,

MOHAMMED AMEEN WALI
Ambassador



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The Saudi Arabia Government and the Saudi People

On the Celebration of their National Day

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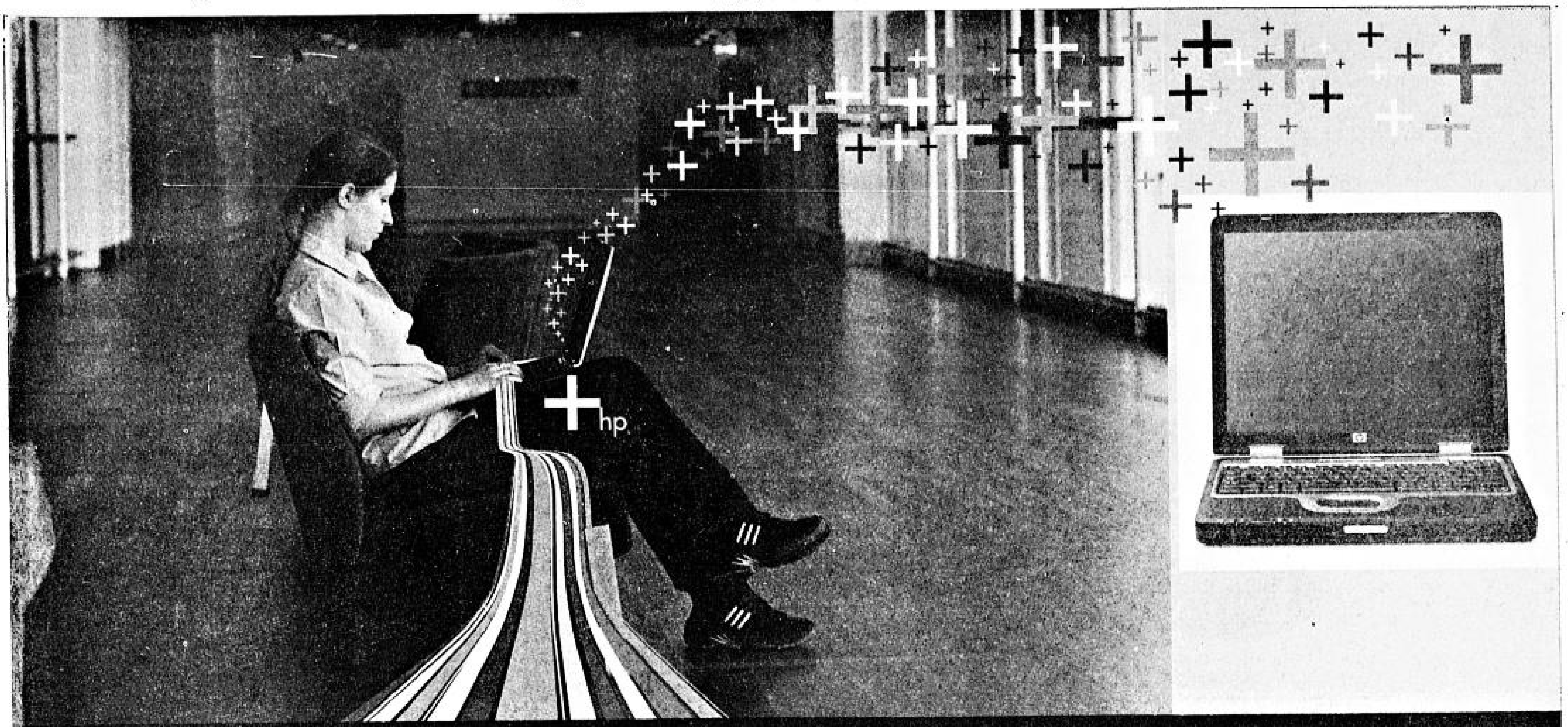

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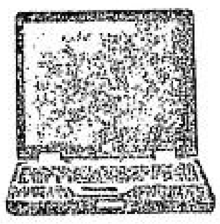

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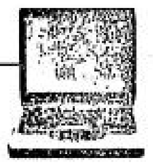

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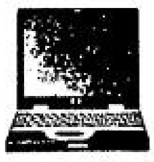

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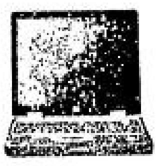

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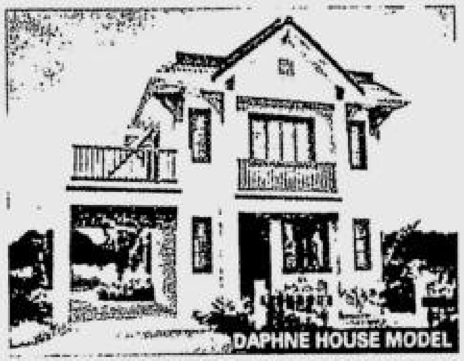

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost ACR Issued To Mr Troy
Don Franklin By Bureau Of
Immigration On October 17,
2004 Makati City.
PDI- Sept 20 -24, 2004

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NPC-MMSD 2004-017

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-MMSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements.

Schedule	Date/ Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	PR No./Inquiry No.	ABC
I	Oct. 19, 2004 10:00 A.M. Kañao Room	Mechanical Parts for Air Compressor of PB 105 "Daihatsu"	APD PB040907-MMAD1584 (PB2)	1,109,630.00
II		Supply of services, materials & equipment for the remanufacturing of Cylinder Heads & Liners and Turbocharger Gas Casing of PB 105	APD PB040908-MMAD1589 (PB2)	1,360,000.00
III	Oct. 19, 2004 2:00 P.M. Kañao Room	Portable Network Analyzer, Satec PNA295-1 or equivalent	VMB PB041019-MMVB1833	1,360,000.00
IV		Mechanical Parts for Viga DPP "Perkins"	APD PB041019-MMAD1834	1,753,000.00
V	Oct. 29, 2004 2:00 P.M. Hariraya Room	Hauling of Diesel fuel from pick-up points to PB 119, PB 108, Jolo DPP, Basilan DPP, Bongao DPP, Siasi DPP, W. Simunul DPP, Sibutu DPP, Balimbing DPP, M. Mangkaw DPP, Tandubas DPP, Mapun DPP, PB 111, Kalamansig DPP, Dinagat DPP, Loreto DPP, Abad Santos DPP, Talicud DPP, Balut DPP, Ninoy Aquino DPP, Hikdop DPP	MLT PB041020-MMMT1835	43,213,490.00

Note : A Pre-bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules:

Schedule	Date	Time	Place
Schedule I – IV	October 5, 2004	2:00 P.M.	Hariraya Function Room
Schedule V	October 14, 2004	2:00 P.M.	Pahiyas Function Room

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Division, Materials Management Dept. of NPC Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 9245357 / 9245477 upon payment of non-refundable fee of PHP 500.00 per schedule starting on September 23, 2004 from 8:30 to 11:30 A.M. only. No bid documents will be issued 3 days before the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, MMSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD/MMSD will be honored provided that the Certification is still valid.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act. No. 9184.

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/ Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit – One Percent (1%), Bank Guarantee – One and a half percent (1.5%), Surety Bond – Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) LORENZO S. MARCELO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
MMSD-NPC

(PDI – September 23 & 30, 2004)

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY WATER DISTRICT
263 Rizal Avenue, Puerto Princesa City
Tel. Nos. 433-2408, 433-5032, 433-6802
Fax No. (48) 433 6803

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Puerto Princesa City Water District (PPCWD) thru its BAC invites all interested and legitimate suppliers, dealers and manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of assorted sizes of pipes and fittings.

Lot 1 pipes – P 3,056,711.65

DESCRIPTION	SIZE	QUANTITY
uPVC pipes CL 150 W/ R-R	250 mm O x 6m	107 pcs.
uPVC pipes CL 150 W/ R-R	200 mm O x 6m	165 pcs.
uPVC pipes CL 150 W/ R-R (color blue)	150 mm O x 6m	12 pcs.
HDPE SDR 17 (110 mm O outside dia.)	110 mm O x 12 mm	195 pcs.
HDPE SDR 17 (90 mm O outside dia)	90 mm O x 12 m	115 pcs.

LOT 2 FITTINGS AND ACCESSORIES FOR THE ABOVE VARIOUS TYPES OF PIPES – P 248,179.35

Interested parties may get the bid documents at the BAC office, PPCWD at 263 Rizal Avenue, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan from Sept. 24, 2004 upon payment of non-refundable amount of P3,000.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on October 6, 2004, 1 p.m., at PPCWD Office.

Submission of eligibility requirements will be on or before the date of submission and opening of bids on October 18, 2004 at exactly 1:00 p.m., BOD office wall clock.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is P 3,304,891.00 from the City Government and PPCWD's Funds.

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 Series of 2003 will be used in the conduct of this bidding.

The District reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason to waive any or all formalities therein and accept such offer that the PPCWD BAC may consider advantageous to the District.

For more details, contact the PPCWD BAC Chairman, Engr. Vicente D. Abrea at tel. no. 433-2408 or e-mail at ppcwater@mozcom.com.

(Sgd.) ENGR. VICENTE D. ABREA
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Sept. 23 & Oct. 1, 2004)

UFS National Summit slated

ALL systems go for the first ever United Filipino Seafarers (UFS) National Summit as sponsors of the event guaranteed their all-out support.

The said summit which will take place on Sept. 23-26 is the first after former president Fidel Ramos officially declared eight years ago the last week of September as the National Maritime Week, in honor of the seafarers nationwide.

Exploiting on this annual event, several corporations that are closely working with the UFS and RP Events took the initiative in sponsoring this occasion to come up with the summit which seeks to honor and uplift the lives of the seafaring workforce.

Among the sponsors are Philam Life, Globe Telecom, OPTV, Touch Mobile, SmartLink, Globe Kababayan, San Miguel Beer, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), STI, Philam Care and DZMM.

This event is also made possible through the cooperation of Department of Trade and Industry, CREBA, Pag-Ibig, PhilFoodex, Philippine Franchise Association, Asia Pacific Institute of Entrepreneurship, SB Corporation and Center for Small Entrepreneurs.

This event also aims to help the families of every seafarers to manage their finances and earn more by venturing into small or medium scale business.

UFS leader Engr. Nelson Ramirez knowing the plight of every seafarer and now that a lot of them are still searching for jobs or in the brinks of unemployment in face of the stiff competition from the foreign counterparts prompted him to organize this summit for the first time.

The event will also include job fair, livelihood conference, franchising seminar, medical mission, brain-buster contest, variety shows, raffles, singing contest and more surprises.

Organizers of the event said this gathering will also open doors of opportunities not only for the seafarers but for everybody else involved in the maritime industry.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the Lost Official Receipt of LOYOLA PLANS 1979011 whole set 1979012 green copy only any transaction with this O.R. will not be honored by the company.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

earnextranow.com code:atb2004 8531008 09178901851 Arlene

EARN P10T up/week - HOW? share d bisnez 0921-5914739

EXTRA INCOME 7126374

Extra Income P10T/mo up Part /Full Time 09164217139

Inc Income PT upto 20T/mo3732531

NEED INCOME? 2910770

RTW Wholesaler 3738821

Seeking Pinoy Entreprenuer to Expand Biz Globally. Sincerely invite you to our Int'l Biz Preview held in Makati - Training Supervisor 0927-7114699

Since '98 the L88 Grp has helped thousands in Asia/ USA to set up global biz to create wealth that lasts. Details @ www.L88edc.com

WANTED TO BUY

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Taxi Driver 4542496/4533222
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FEMALE

PHARMACIST • 639-4556

TELEMARKETERS 718-0736

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
10th Judicial Region
Branch 30
Surigao City

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE CHANGE OF NAME FROM MARIA CORISA BAUTISTA TO CORISA BAUTISTA AND CORRECTION OF ENTRIES IN HER BIRTH RECORD

CORISA BAUTISTA BENITEZ,
Petitioner,
- versus -
THE LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRAR OF CEBU CITY,
Respondent.
x------------------------------------x

SP. PROC. NO. 6278

ORDER

A verified petition has been filed by petitioner Corisa Bautista Benitez, through her counsel, on 21 July 2004, praying for the change of said petitioner's first name as well as for the correction of erroneous entries regarding the latter's gender and also the surname of her mother, all appearing in her birth record on file with the Office of the Local Civil Registrar of Cebu City, alleging among others:

"That petitioner was born on 18 November 1954 at Cebu City to spouses Isagani Bautista and Corazon Kaimo; that the fact of birth of petitioner was duly registered in the Office of the Local Civil Registrar of Cebu City; that in the said birth record, the first name of petitioner was entered as "Maria Corisa"; that since "petitioner's birth until the present the latter has been using habitually, continuously and actually the first name Corisa; that in the same birth record, the sex of the petitioner as well as the maiden surname of her mother were erroneously entered as "male" and "Caimo", respectively; that such entries are erroneous because petitioner's true and correct sex as well as the maiden surname of her mother are "Female" and "Kaimo", respectively; and, that petitioner wanted to change her first name as well as desires to correct the erroneous entries concerning her sex and the maiden surname of her mother, all appearing in her birth record in order to avoid any unwarranted confusion. Hence, this petition."

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, the same is hereby given due course and set for hearing on 22 October 2004, at 8:30 o'clock in the morning, at the Session Hall of this Court, Hall of Justice Bldg., Surigao City, at which date, time and place any interested person may appear and show cause, if he has any, why this petition should not be granted.

Accordingly, the petitioner is hereby ordered to publish this order once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the entire Philippines before the above-scheduled hearing of this petition at her own expense.

Let copy of this order be furnished the Office of the Local Civil Registrar of Cebu City. Likewise, let copy of this Order and the petition be also furnished the Office of the Solicitor-General, Makati City, all for their information and appropriate action.

SO ORDERED.

Given in Chambers this 12th day of August 2004 at Surigao City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) **FLORIPINAS C. BUYSER**
Presiding Judge

(PDI--Sept. 16, 23 & 30, 2004)

IBB

Marketing Assistant, Philippines

The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), a part of the United States Government, is looking for a Marketing Assistant in Manila to perform a wide variety of routine marketing related activities. The IBB includes the Voice of America radio and television service, one of the largest newsgathering organizations in the world and a leader in providing news and entertainment programs around the globe.

Applicant MUST have an in-depth knowledge of the media environment in the Philippines; 3 years experience working for a broadcast station; excellent interpersonal and negotiation skills; be able to travel occasionally; be fluent in spoken and written English; be able to work independently with little supervision. Applicant must be mature, resourceful, have initiative, etc.

Responsibilities: Assist Regional Marketing Director (RMO) in Bangkok; Maintain close contacts with regional/U.S. IBB offices; Update IBB affiliate database; Monitor and research media developments in the Philippines; monitor VOA broadcast on various stations in the Philippines; arrange for equipment installation; write weekly reports; negotiate rebroadcast agreements & perform other duties as assigned.

Fax your detailed resumé and letter to Joyce Ngoh at 66-2-205-5707, send by email to jmngoh@ibb-bkk.org or mail it to *IBB, The Millennia Bldg., Rm 1501, 62 Langsuan Rd., Bangkok 10330, Thailand.* Applications must be received by close of business on September 24, 2004.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

PROMO GIRLS FOR GMA PAMPANGA & BULACAN AREAS OFFICE & ACCOUNTING STAFF 527-1565 527-6418 / 09178730929

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CAREGIVER T-5280747

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OFCSTF 09177351628 BETH

OFFICE STAFF 09196913491 VEA

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Regional Office 6
Bgy. Quintin Salas, Jaro, Iloilo City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **National Food Authority, Region 6**, with its office at Brgy. Quintin Salas, Jaro, Iloilo City invites all interested Private Security Agencies (PSAs) with established operations and office in Western Visayas to register, apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of security services in Region 6.

The Application Forms for Registration may be obtained from RBAC Secretariat c/o Marilou M. Paguntalan, 2nd Floor, Iloilo Regional Office after payment of non-refundable Application Fee of P500.00.

Only those PSAs which have been registered with NFA may obtain from RBAC Secretariat, the Eligibility and Bid documents upon payment of additional non-transferable, non-refundable Eligibility Bidding Fee of P1,000.00.

Pre-Bidding Conference and the Bidding Proper shall be conducted at the NFA Iloilo Regional Office Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Jaro, Iloilo City, on the following schedule:

Activities	Date	Time
1. Issuance of Application Forms For Registration	Sept. 16-30, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2. Issuance of Eligibility & Bid Documents	Oct. 7 - Nov. 7, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
3. Pre-Bidding Conference	Nov. 08, 2004	9:00 AM
4. Bidding Proper	Nov. 26, 2004	9:00 AM

For more details, please contact RBAC Chairperson or Ms. Marilou M. Paguntalan at Telephone Nos. (033) 320-6246 and 329-2165.

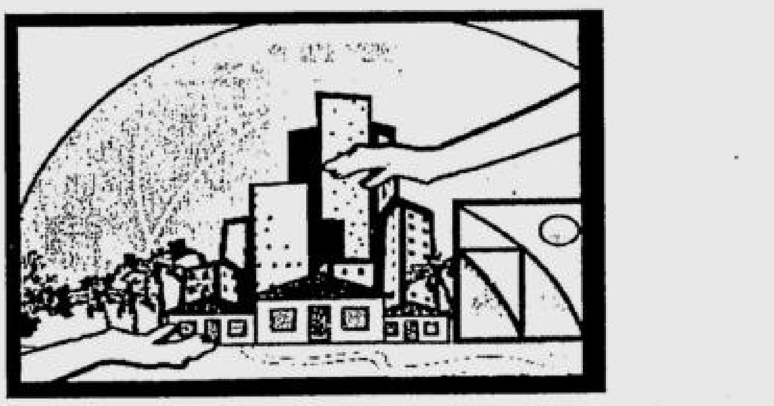
THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BID PROPOSALS, TO WAIVE ANY REQUIRED FORMALITY OR DEFECT THEREIN AND MAY ACCEPT THE BID WHICH IS DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) **JAVIER P. LOZADA, JR.**
Regional Director

(PDI - Sept. 16 & 23, 2004)

NATIONAL REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION, INC
(The One-Stop Trade Organization)

CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THE
9th NATIONAL CONVENTION & EXHIBITS



THEME: "CREATING THE NEW FILIPINO COMMUNITY IN THE 21st CENTURY"

*September 23 – 25, 2004 * 10 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.*
MEGATRADE HALL 3, 5/F BUILDING B
SM MEGAMALL, EDSA, MANDALUYONG CITY, METRO MANILA

The Convention theme reflects both the challenges and opportunities faced by real estate practitioners in providing for the needs of the increasing number of Filipinos especially those who will be living and working in urban areas.

The sub-themes :

1) Planning and Design : Emerging Concepts 2) Development Regulations : Standards and Procedures 3) Project Financing and Implementation : Techniques and Requirements 4) Project Marketing and Estates Management. Participants will come form the Private and Government offices from various regions of the Philippines and other Asian countries.

REAL ESTATE BROKERS CAN EARN 16-HOUR CEP CREDITS

NREA Member	Php. 1700	Students	Php 1000
Non-Member	Php 2300	Accompanying Person	Php 1000

(They may also register directly at the registration booths.)

(Includes 2 Lunch, 3 Snacks, 1 Cocktails, Certificate of Attendance, Kit and Convention Documents)

NOTICE

Please make checks payable to :
NREA
Email : nrea_org@yahoo.com or nrea@cyberlink.net.ph
*Telephone No. 913-4463 * Telefax 912-3492*

SINGAPORE AIRLINES
A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

SINGAPORE AIRLINES INVITES APPLICANTS FOR THE POSITION OF

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE

QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS:
- MBA graduate from a reputable school.
- Good communication skills in English and Pilipino (oral & written).
- Outgoing with good customer service temperament.
- Innovative, IT savvy and goal-driven.
- Independent with strong analytical & problem solving abilities.
- Below 30 years of age.

We offer free travel to any SIA destination, discounted travel and a variety of other excellent benefits. We provide training locally and overseas.

Application in writing enclosing copies of transcript of records, diploma and other credentials, and a recent passport-size photo should be addressed, before 30 September 2004, to:

General Manager Philippines
Singapore Airlines
3rd Floor, Singapore Airlines Bldg.
138 H V de la Costa St.
Salcedo Village, Makati City

Alternatively, send your application to **Mcs_MNL@singaporeair.com.sg**.

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

Please mark "MT MNL" at the top left-hand corner of the envelope.

PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE
Air Logistics and Support Command
HEADQUARTERS 420th SUPPLY WING, PAF
Clark Air Base, Philippine Air force
(Air Force City)
Angeles City, Pampanga

NOTICE OF SALE TO PUBLIC BIDDING

The PAF Disposal Committee will receive sealed bids until 14 October 2004, 8:50 AM at Conference Room, 420th Supply Wing, Clark Air Base, Angeles City, Pampanga for the sale of the following unserviceable properties on **"As is where is"** basis.

Lot Number/Description	Location	Min Bid Price
5-257-009 – One (1) lot of 10,532 line items of aircraft parts	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 901,125.00
5-257-010 – One (1) lot of 29,110 line items of aircraft parts	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 1,012,500.00
5-257-011 – One (1) lot of 22,245 line items of aircraft parts	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 1,123,200.00
6-222-03 – Consisting of One (1) NOMAD a/c carcass tail#RP 15	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 36,000.00
6-106-037 – Consisting of Two (2) F-5 a/c w/ tail #323 & 505	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 247,500.00

NOTICE OF SALE TO PUBLIC NEGOTIATION

Lot Number/Description	Location	Min Bid Price
5-283-022 – Consisting of Ten (10) T-28 engines with canister	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 405,000.00
5-283-023 – Consisting of Eight (8) T-28 engines without canister	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga	P 388,000.00

REMINDERS TO BIDDERS:
1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before bidding.
2. To submit bid in PAF official bid form.
3. Earnest money is required in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to 10% of the minimum bid price
4. To be on time. No bid will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commence.
5. Pre bid conference and issuance of Bid Forms P200.00 will be on **7 October 2004, 9:00 AM** at **Conference Room, 420th Supply Wing, Clark Air Base, Angeles City, Pampanga.**
6. Inspection schedule will be from **30 September 2004** to **01 October 2004**, at **0800H to 1600H Thursday** and **Friday.**
7. Opening of bids will be on **14 October 2004, 9:00 AM at Conference Room, 420th Supply Wing, Clark Air Base, Angeles City, Pampanga.**

PAF DISPOSAL COMMITTEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN AND TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE PAF.

For details and schedule inspection, call 1LT MARIBELLE A BELILA PAF at (045) 599-2015 loc 6524 or cell nr 09175035079.

(Sgd.) **GILBERT S LLANTO**
Colonel PAF (GSC)
Deputy Wing Commander, 420th SW
Chairman, PAF Disposal Committee

(PDI-Sept. 23, 24 & 25, 2004)

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis Street, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephones (632) 5513438 • 5513454 • Facsimile (632) 5513436
E-mail: info@peza.gov.ph • Website: www. peza.gov.ph

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
Roxas Boulevard cor. San Luis St.
Pasay City, Philippines

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **PANASONIC COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (PCCP)** with plant site at the Carmelray Industrial Park II – Special Economic Zone (CIP II-SEZ) has filed **PIONEER STATUS** to be granted to its production of DVD Multi Disc (DMD) Drive based on newness of product and technology, which if approved, will entitle the company to six (6) years of Income Tax Holiday. Said application has been officially accepted and is under process in this office.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file with the PEZA his/her objections in writing and under oath, within fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication.

Please direct your position papers/comments to the Enterprise Regulations Department of PEZA [Tel. Nos. 551-9544; and telefax 551-3456].

LILIA B. DE LIMA
Director General

By:

(Sgd.) **WILHELM G. ORTALIZ**
Deputy Director General
for Policy and Planning

(PDI--Sept. 23, 2004)

Pact of unity

MAJOR Players in the Agricultural Sector during the Welcome Ceremony at Department of Agriculture on August 23, 2004 signed a Pact of Unity with the new Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, Congressman Benasing Macarambon, Jr., Chair, Committee on Agriculture, former Undersecretary Ernesto Ordoñez, Chairman, Alyansa Agrikultura and National President Antonio B. Reyes of the National Federation of Employees' Association in the Department of Agriculture (NAFEDA). The Salient points of the pact are: 1) Protect and Defend the Philippine Agricultural Industries 2) Work for the Non-Privatization of attached Agencies and Bureaus of the Department of Agriculture (DA) 3) Insulate the DA From Political and Vested Interests 4) Uphold the Rights and Welfare of Employees and its Stakeholders 5) Pursue Relentlessly the Crusade for a Graft-Free DA 6) Unity Multi-Sectoral Effort to Enhance Delivery of Services for the Benefit of the Filipino People.

NOTICE OF LOSS

The public is hereby informed that the following Official Receipts Nos.: 178364-178400 of ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc. have been lost on Sept. 9, 2004. Said receipts are herewith invalidated and shall not be honored/recognized by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

(PDI-Sept 23, 2004)

Cosmo's Bachelor Bash

COSMOPOLITAN magazine unleashes the sexiest, most gorgeous hunks in 2004 in the September Men! Men! Men! Issue. Get the chance to see these sizzling-hot men stripped down to the bare essentials at the Cosmo Bachelor Bash, Sept. 23, at 8 p.m. at the NBC Tent, The Fort. And to further sizzle up the party, Astring-o-sol Ice is inviting all the girls to visit the Astring-o-sol Ice Kissing Booth. Girls get the chance to kiss gorgeous hunks in the booth, get free samples, and even join the Sexiest Kiss game and the much awaited Kiss or Dare game.

'Jammin' at the Pond'

THE 888 Fishing Place, Bar and Restaurant in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite will stage a 1st anniversary presentation on Oct. 2, at 7 p.m. Acoustic bands like Feedback, 2nd Session, and Revive Band will lead the one-night, non-stop party titled "Jammin' at the Pond" powered by Músak Pro audio system and sponsored by Malvar Supermarkets. Tickets are priced at P 100 inclusive of one drink. 888 Fishing Place, Bar and Restaurant is the hottest anglers hub in Cavite. It is located in Covelandia road, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite some 18 kms. from Manila. For reservation call, 888 Fishing Place at (046) 434-0803.

Free special training for Filipino nurses

THE PHILIPPINE Women's University is giving free training, guidance and counseling to graduate and registered nurses in collaboration with an international group of experts in this field. Yantra (YC) Corp, a duly registered Philippine company that has affiliations with nursing and healthcare institutions and experts notably in the European Union, has linked up with PWU to institutionalize a program for upgrading the skills and competencies of our Filipino nurses through information development, hands-on training on simulation courses, and upgrading of instructional facilities and materials. Interested nurses are enjoined to email their resume and photo to pwunursing@pwu.edu.ph for a confirmed registration.

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION of the PHILIPPINES

Celebrating 27 years of excellence in Production Management

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(AMI Phils., Inc)

will hold its **17th Annual National Convention** at the New World Renaissance Hotel on September 30 and October 1, 2004. The event will cap the year long celebration of **PROMAP**'s 27th anniversary in the field of manufacturing management. Her Excellency President GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO declaring the period from September 27 to October 1, 2004, Proclamation no. 710 as **"Production Management Week"**

"Gearing for Growth: Harnessing the Best Practices and Strategies in Operations Management

Keynote Speaker

Senator Mar Roxas

Speakers

MS. AVELYNN R. GARCIA (UNLEASH INT'L. CORP.)
Unleashing the Highest Potential in People

DR. ANTONIO VILLAFLOR (INTEL TECHNOLGY PHILS)
Quality Management System That Pays

MR. EUGENIO S. FLORENDO (INFORMATICS)
Integrated Work System

MR. CESAR Q. GALVEZ (MEAD JOHNSON)
Lean Process: A Revival

MR. RUBENSTEIN J. MAÇABULOS (SELECTA WALLS)
TPM, A Dominant Tool to Productivity

MR. RAMON E. SALAZAR (INTEL TECHNOLOGY PHILS.)
PANEL DISCUSSION: On Productivity

MR. REGGIE P. SACLOTE (PEPSICO)
Real Time Inventory Management

MR. VICENTE C. DINGLASAN (IDS LOGISTICS)
Supply Chain Management: A Case Study

MR. GREG H. BANZON (KINO CONSUMERS PHILS., INC.)
Outsourcing: Strategic Option for Manufacturing

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PANEL DISCUSSION: On Productivity

MR. PETER RAMOLETTE (IBM)
Radio Frequency Identification

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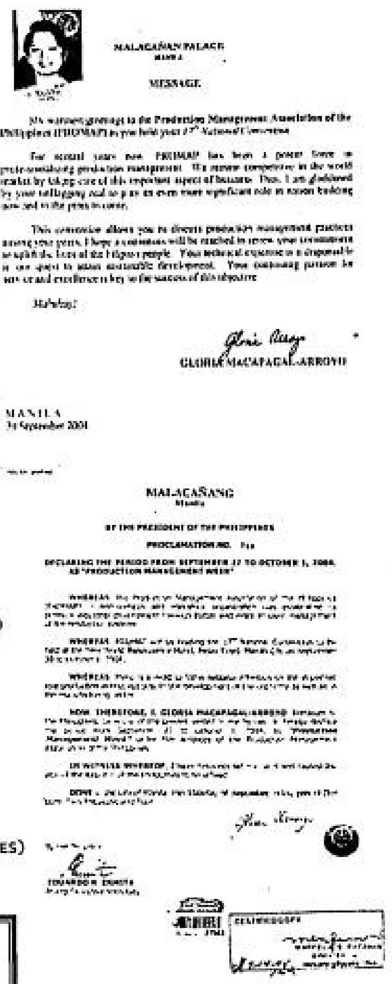
Business Solution for Manufacturing



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MESSAGE

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

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CHEMWORLD Fragrance Institute will offer free seminars on perfume-making and aromatherapy on Sept. 18 and 25, and Oct. 2 and 9 (Saturdays), 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The half-day hands-on training will give participants practical and technical knowledge on perfumery and aromatherapy. Easy-to-follow formulations plus tips on how to start a fragrance business will be presented in the seminar. Complete supplies and materials, including a comprehensive manual, will be made available. Thus at the end of the seminar, Chemworld guarantees that the participants can start the business as soon as they get home. While the seminar itself is free, there is a minimal fee of P100 to cover cost of the materials which will be used in the hands-on session. The compounded perfume products may be taken home by the participants. If you are looking for a serious business opportunity, corporate give-aways, or holiday presents, here's the answer. For reservation, all interested parties can call (02) 890-9844 to 47 ext. 14 or 39 and look for Alex Guiao or call mobile numbers 0917-8736547 and 0917-8736548 or send email to chemwrld@info.com.ph.

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"I am the resurrection and the life;
he who believes in Me, will live even when he dies."
– John 11:25

Our Most Beloved

Ma. Esperanza "Pinky" G. Gunn

Peacefully passed on to eternal life to join our Lord
on September 15, 2004 in Vancouver, Canada

She is mourned by her loving husband, **Dan**
Parents, **Serafin** and **Virginia Gonzalez**
Siblings, **Tonito & Eileen, Marianne & Ted, Cristina, Raymond & Thess, Georgina**
and the **Gonzalez, Zamora** and **Gunn Families**

Her remains lie in state at Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City from Thursday, September 23 to Sunday, September 26.

In celebrating her blessed life, funeral services will be held on Sunday, September 26 after an offering of the Holy Eucharist at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon. Interment will be on Sunday, September 26, 2004, at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the Mass.

In lieu of flowers, please send your donations to PGH Medical Foundation, Inc., Ground Floor, Nurses Home Philippine General Hospital, Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila
Tel. Nos. (632) 536-2874; (632) 521-8450 local 3061
Email: sec@pghmedfoundation.org

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6

SOCORRO SANTOS PAULINO

of Oas, Albay

Peacefully joined her Creator
on Sept. 21, 2004 at the age of 79.

Her loving children **Angelita** and **Baldur Host** of Stuttgart, Germany; **Fr. Felino Paulino** of Seattle, WA.; **Roberto** and **Ruth Paulino** of San Diego, CA.; **Chona** and **Amor Tayamen** of Legazpi City; and **Magdalena** and **Stephen Lucas** of Bremerton, WA.; her grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at #34 Olbes St., Vel-Amor Subd., Legazpi City.

Funeral Mass will be at the Our Lady of Fatima Church at Tahao Road, Legazpi City at 9:00 a.m., Saturday, September 25, 2004 and interment will be at Prestine Memorial Gardens, Legazpi City.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

"My soul, be at rest in God alone from whom comes my hope".
Psalm 41:13

CARMENCITA I. DAGDAYAN

Peacefully joined our Creator
*and her husband **Bayani A. Dagdayan** (†)*
on September 22, 2004 at the age of 68.

Her loving children **Chi** and **Roy**; and grandson **Kevin**; brothers **Emer, Gene** and **Leony**; sister **Ning** and relatives request the readers to join them in praying for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her body lies in state at 2601 Old Panaderos St., Sta. Ana, Manila.

Interment will be on September 25, 2004 at the Loyola Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

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Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

Judge Facundo T. Palafox (ret.)

of
Bani, Pangasinan and Badoc, Ilocos Norte
Husband of **Aurelia Obtinario** (†)

November 7, 1909 - September 21, 2004

Children:
Nora and **Deo Custodio**
Lilia and **Jose U. Fernandez**
Jose Voltaire and **Antonieta**
Elena and **Carlos Yu**
Facundo Jr. and **Bernadette**
Tita
Pitoy and **Cris**
Cherry and **David Padua**

Grandchildren and Great-grandchildren

His body lies at Santuario de San Jose,
East Greenhills,
San Juan, Metro Manila

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park
following the 8:00 a.m. Mass
on Saturday, September 25, 2004.

Our Dearly Beloved

Fatima Mahan Lee

of Jolo, Sulu and Quezon City

*Peacefully joined the Lord and her husband **Lee Peng Ching***
on September 21, 2004 at the age of 94.

Her children **Chin Chu & John Ramos Yeo** (†), **Chin Bee** (†), **Carolyn & Enrique Luy, Evelyn, Pat & Bernadette, Robert & Linda, Rosalind & Lee Hiong Wee, Dennis & Annabel, Marilyn & Perry Pe**, and **Carmen & Robert Tan**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great great-grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz (Superior Chapel), Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 25, 2004, 9:00 a.m.

EMILITA "MILITA" LIM CRUZ

Peacefully and happily joined our dear Lord & Blessed Mother on Sept. 22, 2004 at the age of 66.

Her dear children **TINA, BABO, ISA, TONI** and **LALA**; children-in-law **JIGS, LIA, DENDEN, LITO** and **DANNY**; grandchildren, brothers, sisters and other relatives and friends mourn her passing but delight in knowing that she will be finally reunited with **Rogle**, her loving husband in heaven.

Her body lies in state at Chapel A & B, Christ the King Church in Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2004, schedule to be announced later.

"Hear me in the wind
See me in the season's change
Be glad in the moment."

The Philippine Breast Cancer Network
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Power-intensive Luzon users to choose own source

By Abigail L. Ho

STARTING July 1, 2006, Luzon power consumers using at least 1 megawatt (MW) of electricity can choose from which power producer they would source their power requirements.

This was due to the implementation of the the open access transmission service (OATS) in the region.

Under the OATS, large power users would be allowed to use the National Transmission Corp.'s transmission lines to source electricity from their power distributor of choice.

Visayas power .users would be afforded the same privilege after six months, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said in a forum at the University of the Philippines yesterday.

Several conditions, however, have to be met, as provided under Republic Act No. 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

These include the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of unbundled transmission and distribution wheeling charges, the initial implementation of the cross-subsidy removal scheme, the establishment of a wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), the privatization of at least 70 percent of the National Power Corp.'s generating capacity in Luzon and Visayas, and the transfer of management and control of at least 70 percent of total energy output of Napocor's independent power producers to IPP administrators.

As of June 2004, the ERC has already resolved 76 percent of all unbundling cases filed by distribution utilities.

Unbundling means separating the components of a power user's electricity bill, to show separate charges relating to generation, transmission, distribution and supply.

For the cross-subsidy removal, the first phase began in September last year, with the second installment to be implemented this month.

This means taking away subsidies within the Luzon grid, as Metro Manila power users are subsidizing electricity consumers in the rest of Luzon.

Subsidies between the Luzon and Visayas grids would also be removed.

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), on the other hand, was working overtime to meet the end-2005 target for the privatization of 70 percent of Napocor's generating capacity in Luzon and the Visayas.

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CAPITAL EXPENSES

LRTA to borrow ₱7.2B for 2005

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE LIGHT Railway Transit Authority has committed to limit its borrowings next year to P7.17 billion, or 21 percent lower than this year's P9.11 billion.

LRTA counts on borrowings to meet its funding requirements of P12.93 billion for this year and P12.47 billion for next year.

Of this year's funding requirement of the agency, P3.82 billion will come from the government and LRTA's operating revenue.

The railway agency, which operates LRT Line 1 from Monumento to Baclaran and Line 2 from Santolan in Pasig to Recto in Manila, has outstanding debt of more than P30 billion.

As of August, the LRTA booked a little over P1 billion in revenue, up 25 percent from about P800 million in the same period last year.

From the projected P2.28 billion this year, LRTA's operating revenue is expected to reach P3 billion in 2005.

Despite the projected increase in revenue, the government's share in LRTA's funding is expected to go up to P2.32 billion in 2005 from P1.53 billion this year.

LRTA Administrator Melquiades Robles said the agency would try to cut costs and realize some savings for the government while a petition for a P10 fare hike was being deliberated, said Robles, who recently took over the LRTA top post from former Nueva Ecija Rep. Pacifico Fajardo.

Robles said LRTA's finances should improve as ridership, especially in Line 2, was expected to increase once the Recto station starts operations in October. LRTA's Line 2 carries an average of 100,000 passengers daily while Line 1 has about 300,000.

From January to August, the LRTA said it generated P128.6 million in sales from Line 2 against P10.6 million a year ago. Revenue from Line 1 went up to P904.3 million during the eight-month period against P790 million last year.

"To save on costs, we plan to localize the purchase of spare parts without sacrificing safety. We aim for efficiency and austerity," said Robles.

The LRTA said expenditures would reach P12.74 billion this year and dip slightly to P12.47 billion next year. Capital outlay and debt servicing are expected to account for the bulk of its expenditures this year and in 2005.

This year, the LRTA said it was programmed to spend about P8 billion for capital expenditure, P2.88 billion for debt servicing and P1.62 billion for operations. It is scheduled to settle P237 million in obligations that was not paid in the previous year.

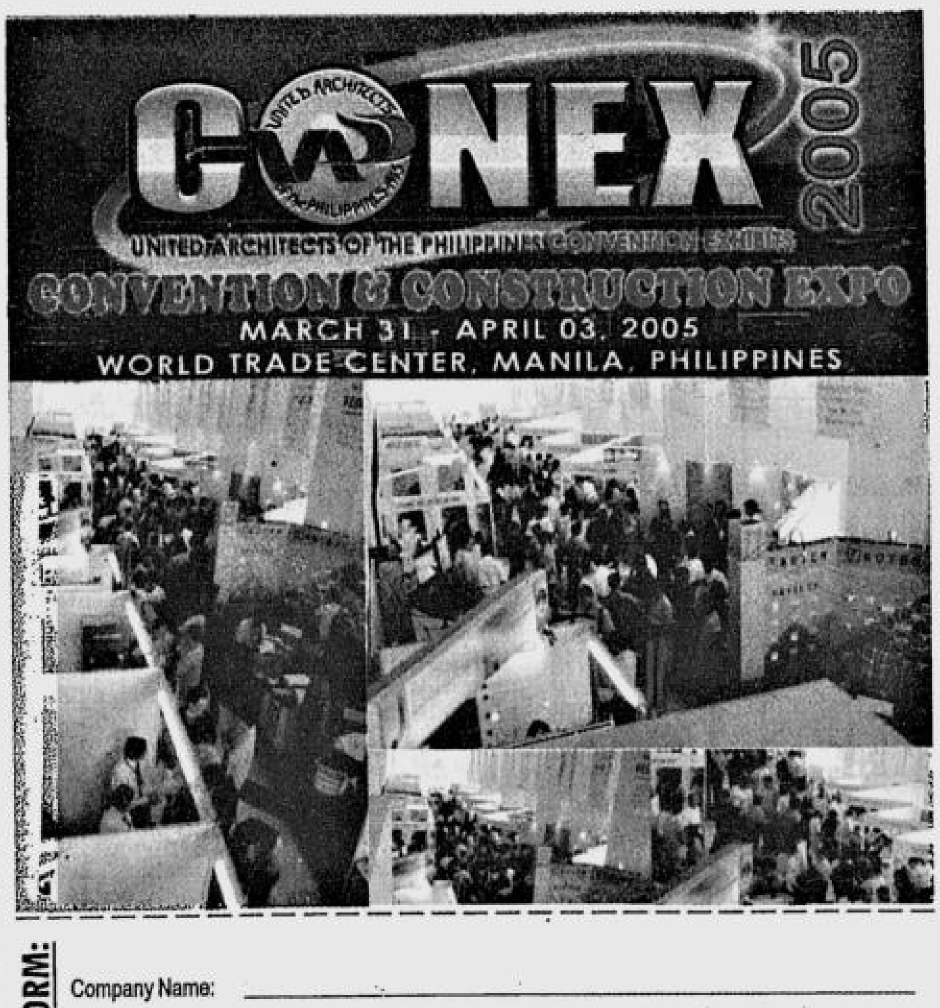
In 2005, the railway agency said capital expenses would go up slightly to P8.26 billion while debt servicing would go down to P2.51 billion. Operating costs would inch up to P1.699 billion.

Even with increased ridership, the railway authority is pressing for a P10 fare hike so it could reduce losses. The railway firm loses about P1 million daily due to subsidies given to commuters in the form of low fares.

According to the LRTA, the proposed new fare structure would still be cheaper than what other countries in Southeast Asia were charging.

In peso equivalent for roughly the same distance traveled, it was shown that Taipei RTC charges P75.04; Taipei Hsin Tien, P58.46; Japan, TRTA, P57.18; Singapore MRT, P35; Kuala Lumpur LRT, P29; and Singapore Bukit Panjang, P25.82.

LRTA fares range from P12 to P15 while the fare charged by MRT 3 range from P9.50 to P15.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DTI backs proposed new Ro-Ro routes

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is pushing for a proposed executive order that identifies alternative routes for the roll-on roll-off (Ro-Ro) terminal system in a bid to reduce transport costs of basic goods.

According to Trade Assistant Secretary Norman R. Hocson, the proposed EO was drafted with the aim of encouraging non-commercial port operators to go into commercial operations.

The draft EO, which was presented during a recent meeting of the National Price Coordinating Council, was also meant to create alternative Ro-Ro routes for the delivery of vegetables, fish, meat and canned goods.

With the expected reduction in transport and delivery costs, prices of these products were also seen to be substantially drop.

The proposed EO will complement EO No. 172, issued in January 2003, which promoted the Ro-Ro system as an extension of the national highway system.

"The costs incurred in Ro-Ro shipping routes are lower by 30 percent in terms of freight cost and terminal fees," Hocson said.

He said the draft EO would be circulated to concerned parties such as the Philippine Ports Authority and the Maritime Industry Authority for their comments and recommendation.

The Strong Republic National Highway, a combination of road and Ro-Ro systems, covers the following routes: Batangas City to Calapan and Roxas in Oriental Mindoro; Iloilo City to Caticlan and Boracay in Aklan, and Bacolod City to Dumaguete in Negros Oriental to Dapitan in Zamboanga del Norte.

Earlier this year, a study commissioned by the Japan External Trade Organization identified the following new links for the Ro-Ro system: Boac, Marinduque to Lucena City; Abra de Ilog, Mindoro Occidental to Batangas City; Donsol, Sorsogon to Aroroy, Masbate; Maasin, Leyte to Ubay, Bohol; Manapla, Negros Occidental to Ajuy, Iloilo; Samal Island to Davao City; Ternate, Cavite to Mariveles, Bataan; Atimonan, Quezon to Alaban Island; Mambajao, Camiguin to Jagna, Bohol; San Pascual, Masbate to San Narciso, Quezon to Pasacao, Camarines Sur; and Caticlan, Aklan to Semirara Island to Bulalakao, Mindoro Occidental.

PAJ celebrates 28th year

THE PHILIPPINE Agricultural Journalists Inc. (PAJ) will celebrate its 28th Anniversary on Friday, Sept. 24 at the Jumbo Palace Restaurant, Tomas Morato Extension, Quezon City (across Rembrandt Hotel).

Winners of the Annual Binhi Journalism Awards will also be announced during the affair.

The PAJ is an association of editors, reporters and correspondents from mainstream media, and information/media officers of private and government agencies involved in agriculture, agrarian reform and environment.

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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

JP Tuason

Filipino racers are also fuel misers

By Tessa R. Salazar

NOW here's a frequent phone-in question: do you really need to buy expensive equipment to attach to your car to save on fuel?

We decided to "transfer" this flammable query not to automotive and fuel experts (we'd get the same "technical" answers anyway), but to the people we knew consume fuel the most: career race car drivers. All those years behind the wheel getting busy beating the clock and one another has left these drivers "street wiser" in terms of the strange interplay between driving habits and engine response.

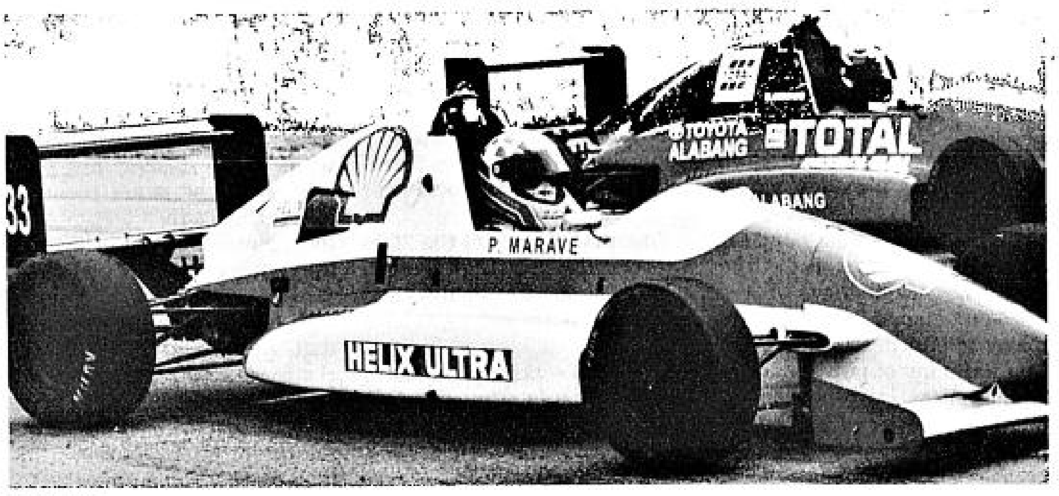
Big advantage

Furthermore, these racers—whether they're into circuit, motorcross, rallycross, or Formula 3 racing—become your regular drivers on the highways. Like us, they feel the pinch of rising fuel prices. Their big advantage, of course, is that with their advanced driving skills, saving fuel has become second nature for them. The good news they tell us is that we don't have to be racing superstars to learn how to save fuel.

Racing legend Pocholo Ramirez—still active at the Miata Cup at the age of 71—has been the talk of the town since achieving a near-impossible feat of 49.7 km per liter during a Honda economy run.

If you think he turned off the engine while running to save fuel, think again. He didn't even tailgate a bus to minimize wind drag, nor did he roll up his window and turn off his air-conditioner. He just did what 40 years in motorsports has taught him—drive impeccably.

"When Dad did it with the Honda econo run it was just a straight drive, and he was very light on the throttle, very gentle with the braking, and anticipated a lot. He built the momentum and tried to maintain it," said race driver Georges Ramirez, one of Pocholo's four sons who's also into racing.



MARAVE

Keeping engine speed low

"One of his techniques was keeping the engine speed low at 1,500 rpm or even 1,200 rpm before shifting up. If your transmission ratios are good then at 1,500 rpm the speed of the car is already good," said racer Kookie Ramirez, Pocholo's eldest son.

Can one drive fast and still be economical?

At 80 to 100 kph, keep an eye on the tachometer as well. Pocholo advises to keep the rpm (engine speed) low. Every time the tachometer reaches 2000 rpm, then shift gears. So even if you're going at 80 or 100 kph, keep your rpm at 2000. 80-kph, Kookie says, is the most economical speed, given that the engine speed is also low.

At the end of that fateful Honda econo-run, even Pocholo couldn't believe his eyes. Now, Pocholo says that feat can be repeatable. "If you're going to do any fuel economy driving, you should never go over 80 kph because above that you'll be using up more gas than if you were driving it less," he says.

And it isn't such a good idea to drive slow in order to save fuel as well. "The key is to get to a higher gear because it's the gearing that will give you the economy. If the rpm is low, that is what will give you economy," Pocholo stresses.

But how do you force an automatic transmission to change gear when the tachometer reaches 2000? "You 'flick' it (meaning abruptly step a little harder), then release. It will change gear. In manual transmission, just accelerate until you reach 2,000 rpm and then shift."

In other words, Pocholo says, "Drive with your tachometer and

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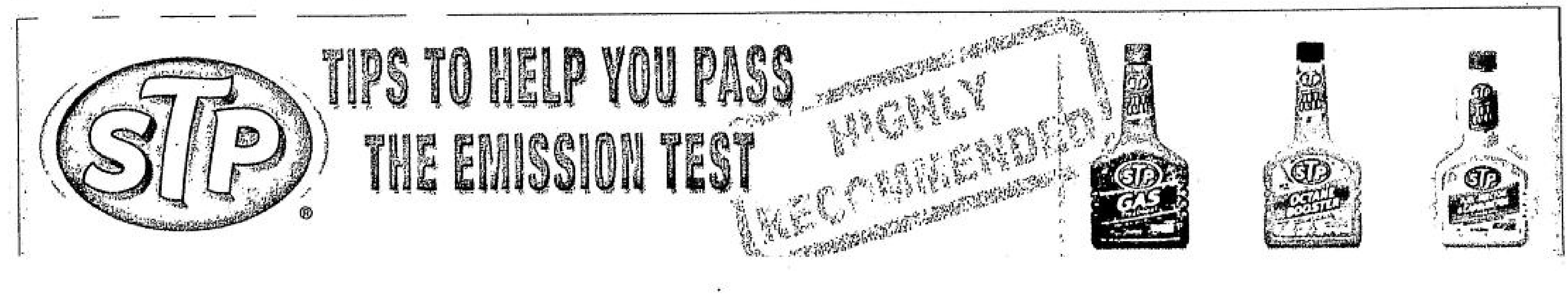

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New NLEX toll reasonable; Camry catch

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Al Mendoza

THE MOST common reaction to any increase in prices is anger. That's not surprising because, by nature, man hates seeing his budget disturbed. He will rejoice if it's a reduction of prices. He will raise his voice if it's an increase of prices. By nature, man is selfish, self-centered, self-preserver.

Take the case of the increased toll at North Luzon Expressway (NLEX). When the toll was increased sometime ago, many protested. They were those who normally belong to the flock of the knee-jerk: one angry fellow normally attracts a throng, especially if the anger is of common nature, such as the slashing of the pocket. It's called the mob mentality. One provokes one with the surefire approach: go for the jugular-money.

But not everybody is angry. And that includes me. I, for one, take the toll increase on a different plane: it is both logical and legal that tolls be increased in light, simply, of the billions of pesos spent to rehabilitate the nearly 40-year-old NLEX.

* * *

Contrary to common notion, the new toll at NLEX is not another unreasonable price increase. What is being collected now is the accurate toll computation, which has again, simply, been enforced in order to operate and maintain the new NLEX in tip-top shape all year round. I now regularly traverse this highway and I really find it a very enjoyable right altogether each time, even as it has yet to be totally completed. My only plaint at the moment is the noncompletion of the NLEX rehabilitation in its targeted date. Correct me on this, please?

• But the toll, I repeat, is not another price increase; it is a new toll computation for a new tollway system. Lest we forget, the new NLEX is an entirely new investment, with new design and new features offering a new level of service under a new management and new operator.

Bottom line is, newness explicitly implies quality. As I keep saying, quality has got to be a little expensive, if not downright expensive, as in a luxury car.

* * *

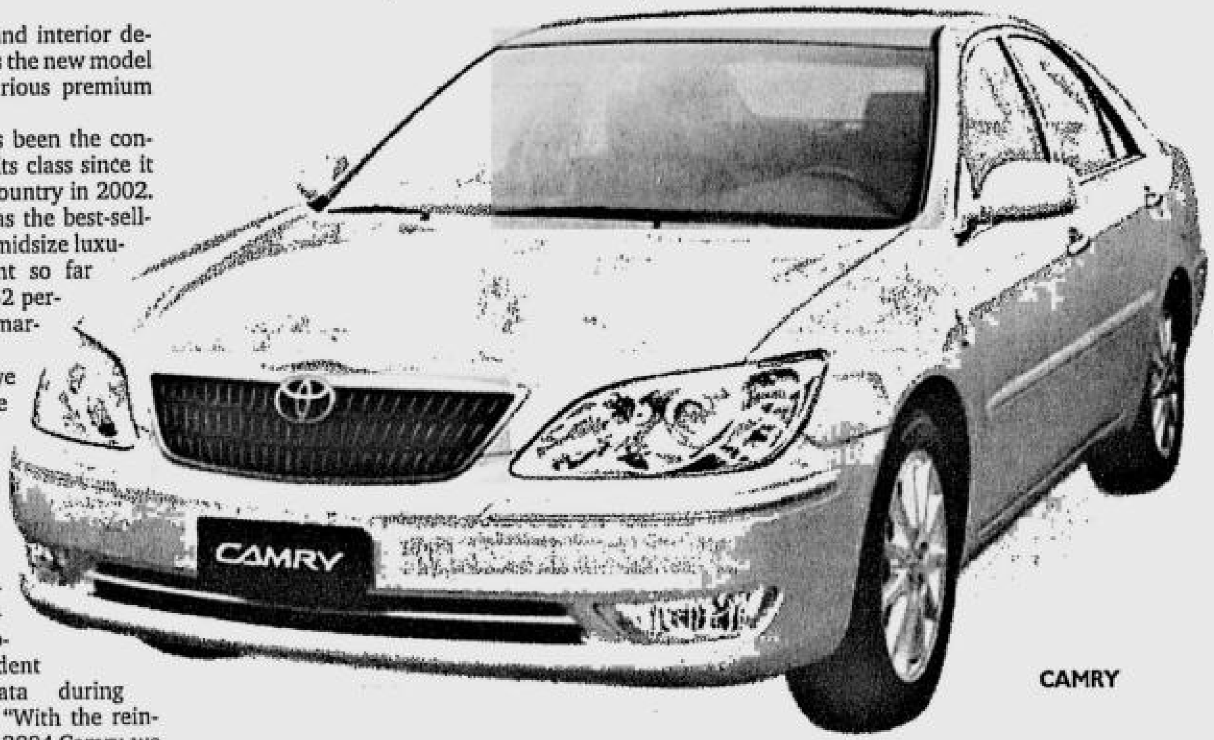
The new Camry, unveiled in July, has been making heads turn wherever it goes. I'm not surprised one bit. Considered as America's best-selling sedan in its class for so long, the new Camry has been equipped with a much higher level of performance with the introduction of a new 3-liter V6 VVT-i engine. Not only is Toyota's flagship model superpowerful and impeccably elegant, it also gives you the best combination of new exterior and interior designs that elevates the new model into a truly luxurious premium sedan.

The Camry has been the consistent leader in its class since it barged into the country in 2002. It has remained as the best-selling model in the midsize luxury sedan segment so far this year with a 52 percent share of the market.

"In Toyota, we strive to be the best that we can be. We continue to raise our standards, to compete not only with others, but also with ourselves," said Toyota Motor Philippines president Nobuharu Tabata during Camry's launch. "With the reintroduction of the 2004 Camry, we are making the best among the best."

* * *

The Camry's new 3-liter, V6 VVT-i engine provides ample torque, quick acceleration, outstanding fuel efficiency and exhilarating performance. The advanced technology of the 1MZ-FE engine enables the driver to effortlessly accelerate in a harmony of power and responsiveness by generating a maximum power of 212 horsepower at 5,800 rpm, an increase of 55 horsepower from the previous model. The new Camry also features a new 5-speed automatic transmission Super ECT that delivers versatile and optimized response for better fuel economy.



CAMRY

One new feature of the 2004 Camry is the HID (High Intensity Discharge) headlamps that radiate a sharp and aggressive aura with its clearer looking lens and inner accents that form the three ovals. The new HID technology has been adopted for longer lasting bulbs and a brighter illumination.

The front seats are equipped with power reclining, sliding and cushion vertical adjust while the rear seats are powered with the same reclining and vertical adjust feature with the controls easily located at the center armrest.

The 2004 Camry is equipped with new active safety features that help avoid accidents. Its clearance and back sonar sensor provide great help when parking as it displays and alerts the driver for obstacles, while the new HID lamps emit greater illumination for increased visibility during night driving.

Finally, one touch of a button releases an automatic sunshade providing instant comfort and luxury for the rear passenger.

The 2.4 Camry is already an excellent buy. With the 3-liter Camry, costing only P1,680,000, the catch is, who needs a Rolls Royce?

* * *

QUOTE ME. I agree. Let's arrest motorists using the cell phone while driving.

Ssangyong unveils Rodius-Stavic MPV

SSANGYONG Motors not only offers SUVs, recreational and passenger cars that break the barriers in design, power, features and price, it also continues to make a big impact in the global car market, including the Philippines.

Now, get ready to be awed by its latest innovation of the leading Korean carmaker, the Rodius-Stavic MPV.

Outstanding features

Just out of the plant last May, the Rodius-Stavic is outlined by outstanding features that are sure to give other multipurpose vehicles (MPVs) stiff competition.

The Rodius-Stavic is run by a 2.7-liter diesel engine, one of the biggest and most economical engine displacements among existing MPVs in the market today. Of German technology, the CRDI engine is similar to the engine of the Mercedes-Benz ML 270. The engine is noted for being powerful, economical and environment-friendly.

Except when compared with a full-fledged van, the Rodius-Stavic is most spacious with a seating capacity of 9 to 11 persons. Measuring 5,125 mm in length and 1,915 mm in width and packaged in a sleek aerodynamic design, the Rodius makes a commanding presence on the road. What's more, it is mean with a T-Tronic 5-speed automatic capability, and a power plant that delivers a maximum power of 165 ps/4,000 rpm and maximum torque of 34.7 kg.m/1,800-3,200 rpm.

The Rodius-Stavic rides on 225/65R16 tires. It has a rear-wheel drive system, which spells more economy and lesser engine wear and tear. Safety is guaranteed with its front airbag, 4-channel ABS, and front and rear ventilated disk brakes.

Value for money

All this notwithstanding, the Rodius comes at an affordable price, a value-for-money feature that will definitely delight intelligent car buyers.

Says Salvador "Dingdong" Lopez, sales manager of Wheels Automall, the exclusive distributor of Ssangyong vehicles in the Philippines: "We give value for your money because the options and features that are available in other car brands are also available in Ssangyong. However, with us you spend several hundreds of thousands of pesos less. The Rodius-Stavic is cheaper, packed with more features, more esthetically appealing and can seat more."

The Rodius-Stavic, according to him, is very popular in Korea and it is in fact in big demand there. In the Philippines, the initial inventory that Wheels Automall brought in sold like hotcakes.

This indeed is a testament to the growing acceptance of Korean vehicles in the country owing to their leverages over the more established brands in terms of price, design and features.

The Rodius-Stavic is offered only at Wheels Automall located at 222 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

Super motorbikes featured at sport truck, custom car show

THIS year's Caltex Delo Sport Truck & Custom Car Show will now include super motorbikes and bicycles as part of its regular event highlights.

The Bike Show will have its own series of displays, bike show competition, seminars and other unique features. It is set from Sept. 29 to Oct. 3 at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.

To be showcased are bicycles for special use such as mountain bikes, touring bikes, velodrome bikes and triathlon bikes from Trek, Cannondale, Shimano, Colnago, Seven and Corima. The Manila Sport Car Club will display a special bicycle donated by BMW, which was used by the security marshals during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. The bike can be folded for easy storage and has many features that are innovative even today.

Clubs

Several motorcycle and bicycle clubs are represented in the show. Among them are the BMW Owners Society of Saferiders, Ducati Desmo Club, Greenhills Cycling Club, HD Riders, National Motorcycle Sports & Safety Association, Philippine Scooter Federation, Vintage Motorcycle Society Philippines and the Manila Sports Car Club.

Most of these clubs are also joining the open class competition for motorcycles. Notable entries to the competition are 2004 Ducati 999R, 2001 Ducati Monster 900, 2004 Ducati 749, 2004 Harley Davidson Classic Softail, 2002 Harley Davidson Fatboy, 2002 Suzuki GSX 1300R Hayabusa, 1977 Colin Lane Racer Bike, 1979 Bob Jackson Tandem Bike, 1942 BSA Clubman 600, 1964 Triumph Trophy, 1960 Norton Commando and a 1960 BMW 600.

Mecca

Organized by TradeShow International Inc., the Caltex Delo Sport Truck & Custom Car Show has become the mecca for sport truck, custom car and automotive racing enthusiasts bringing together under one roof, the most wildly modified sport trucks, SUVs, pickups and cars in the country.

This year, more than 50 well-prepared sport trucks, SUVs and custom cars will be on hand to compete for class honors and ultimately, for the much coveted "Best of Show" award.

Ramon To-Ong, last year's sport truck "Best of Show" winner will put on display his tough 4x4 off-road racers—1985 Toyota Hilux Pickup, 1958 Chevy pickup and a 1992 Toyota Surf. Brian Diaz of Ride Inc. and last year's 1st runner-up "Best of Show" winner will also exhibit his mighty 4x4 off-road racers—a Jeep CJ-7 and a Toyota Landcruiser. Veteran racer Mike Potenciano will loan his Formula 2000 open wheel race car for display.

The show is presented by Caltex Delo with Ambi Pur as gold sponsors and Top Gear magazine as major sponsor. Minor sponsors are EXO Armoring, Sunrise Holidays Concepts, 105.1 Crossover, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT, Wave 89.9, 103.5 K-lite, Jam 88.3, Infodyne, www.yehey.com, Motorcycle Philippines, INQUIRER, Manila Bulletin, Business World, Today, Buy & Sell, Vantage Consulting & Solutions Inc., Sky Star, Samsung, Taytan Int'l Corp. and Citibank.

Filipino racers are also fuel misers

From page C1

you will save a lot of fuel."

There's just one setback to this technique. Overtaking another vehicle might take a lot of work, or not feasible at all since the rpm ranges (1,500 to 2,200) do not give the driver enough power to pass.

'Suave Marave'

Asian Formula 3 champion Pepon Marave just left yesterday for Indonesia to compete in a Formula 3 race. But before leaving, he issued this fearless challenge to taxi and jeepney drivers: let the three of them drive the same car, with the same amount of fuel and end in the same destination. He guarantees that he'll end up with 20 percent more fuel.

Not that he's showboating. Marave even spills the beans on how he'll do it:

Momentum conservation. Pepon says you build up speed (up to 100 kph) "and try to maintain it. Conserve momentum." But isn't high speed guaranteed gas guzzling? Not so, replies Pepon. "A gas guzzler is when you're doing a hundred and you don't know how to anticipate what's in front of you, and you keep on braking, then decelerate again and then build up speed again. It's the erratic speed condition that is fuel consuming."

Thus, smooth driving is also another technique to save on gas. Step on it ever so gently. "*Malakas sa gas yung bomba ka ng bomba, apak bitaw apak bitaw* (You consume more fuel when you keep on stepping hard on the accelerator)." Anticipate four or five cars away, and you won't have to apply the brakes that often.

Anticipate even before turning the ignition. Pepon advises that you plan your trip and choose the route that would be conducive for smooth driving.

Smooth shifting

Smooth driving doesn't only entail the gas pedal, but also the power transmission as well. For gasoline engines, Pepon says that at 2,500 rpm he would already be shifting. For diesel engines it could even be lower, at 1,500 to 2,000 rpm.

The type of engine used is also a big consideration. For city driving, Pepon would prefer driving on a diesel engine. For pure performance, gas is better. "But taking everything into consideration, it's more practical now to get a diesel."

Throw that clutch driving habit out of the window, Pepon stresses. "It will not only destroy the clutch, it will also consume a lot of fuel."

The best fuel saving technique is when you share the car, and the fuel expenses in a car pool. Pepon considers himself an advocate of the car pool. "I wish there were car pool lanes on Edsa, a special lane for cars with three or more passengers."

Does he advise owners of large engines to junk the big one and get the 1.3- or 1.5-liter instead? No need to, he replies. Though a large engine would always consume more fuel, "if you drive it right, you can still maximize its fuel efficiency."

HELIX
HELIX
HELIX
2004

FUEL miser "Suave" Marave

Driving big engines right means avoiding idle time as much as possible. For Tuason Racing School teacher JP Tuason, big engine cars (2 liters up) consume more fuel because of the traffic situation in Metro Manila. Says JP: "We're always stuck in traffic, the car is always idle, it just consumes a lot of fuel when it stays idle. Smaller engines consume less gas when they're running on idle."

He stresses that drivers should keep an eye on the tachometer. "Keep within the correct power band. Make sure you're not overrevving or underrevving the engine." Revving higher than 3,000 rpm makes the engine consume more fuel than it needs. But revving below 1,500 rpm is also difficult for the engine, as it does not burn the fuel properly.

A well-maintained car is also necessary. If your car is not tuned up properly there's a lot of gas wastage as the unburned fuel merely comes out of the tailpipe.

Other checklists

His other to-do checklists that would also help save gas:

- **Eliminate jackrabbit starts.** Accelerate slowly when starting from a dead stop. Don't push the gas pedal down more than 1/4 of the total foot travel. This allows the carburetor to function at peak efficiency.
- **Make sure tires are inflated properly.**

JP also makes sure he uses only high-quality oil. "The lower the oil grade, the dirtier the engines run. And if it doesn't run very clean, it affects the engine's performance. This consumes more gas. The higher quality oil lasts longer and helps burn fuel more efficiently."

More tips

And since rising fuel prices is a global issue, we decided to surf the Net for "good Samaritans" who were willing to share their own secrets to saving fuel. We found practical tips from howtoadvice.com. Maybe the guys at the tracks can find these tips useful, too.

- **Buy gasoline during the coolest time of the day.** Early morning or late evening is best. During these times gasoline is densest. Keep in mind that gas pumps measure volumes of gasoline, not densities of fuel concentration. You are charged according to "volume of measurement."
- **Avoid filling gas tank to the top.** Overfilling results in sloshing over and out of tank. Never fill the gas tank past the first "click" of the fuel nozzle (if the nozzle is automatic).
- **Keep windows closed when traveling at highway speeds.** Open windows cause air drag, reducing your mileage by 10 percent.
- **Avoid tailgating—the driver in front of you is unpredictable.** Not only is tailgating unsafe, but it affects your economy if he slows down unexpectedly.
- **Think ahead when approaching hills.** If you accelerate, do it before you reach the hill, not while you're on it. Avoid rough roads whenever possible, because dirt or gravel rob you of up to 30 percent of your gas mileage.
- **Use alternate roads when they are safer, shorter and straighter.** Compare traveling distance differences—remember that corners, curves and lane jumping require extra gas. The shortest distance between two points is always straight.
- **Automatic transmissions should be allowed to cool down when your car is idling at a standstill, railroad crossings, long traffic lights, etc.** Place gear into neutral position. This reduces transmission strain and allows transmission to cool.
- **Park car so that you can later begin to travel in forward gear.** Avoid reverse gear maneuvers to save gas.

So, what's the answer to the query? It seems you don't have to buy anything more than what you already have since you were born. Unlearning some bad habits to make room for the good ones, aided by the wisdom coming from your coconut, and you could soon easily pooh-pooh the next round of oil price increases, well, at least a little bit more than the other bad driver.

- **Check your owner's manual for recommended maintenance intervals.**
- **Make sure to maintain clean air filters as diminished airflow increases gas wastage.**
- **Have suspension and chassis parts inspected for occasional misalignments.** Bent wheels, axles, bad shocks, or broken springs would create engine drag and are also unsafe.

The risks of buying a converted car

THOSE of us who cannnot afford to buy a brand-new car have two options: 1) buy a slightly used car that is one or two years old, or has less than 20,000 km mileage; or 2) buy an imported, originally right-hand drive (RHD) used motor vehicle that has been converted to left-hand drive (LHD) and auctioned in Subic.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

The lure of buying a used import from Subic is almost irresistable. Imagine, you can own a made-in-Japan SUV or minivan for one-third the price of the same locally assembled model! If you are a used car buyer, it is easy to believe the importers' claim that they are not violating any law by converting RHD vehicles to LHD as long as they pay the proper taxes and duties, and as long as the conversion is done within the Subic economic zone in a shop accredited by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA). What's more, the importers reassure you that the converted vehicles are safe because they are not sold until they have passed roadworthiness, safety and emission tests conducted by the Land Transportation Office's Motor Vehicles Inspection Section.

Questions

It is at this point, however, that the buyer should start asking questions. How efficiently does the government regulate the crucial conversion process? What are the SBMA's criteria for an auto shop's accreditation to convert RHDs to LHDs? How qualified is the SBMA to evaluate a shop's capability to perform conversion jobs properly? Do the LTO inspectors have the technical expertise and how do they check a converted vehicle's roadworthiness and compliance with safety and emission standards? By subjecting the car to a rigorous road test or by merely running the engine for some minutes?

Be aware that converting RHD cars is a high-volume, lowest-bidder, wholesale business in Subic and that a lot of transferring of electrical parts and welding is done to accommodate the repositioning of the steering wheel and pedals. This increases the risk of an electrical fire while the engine is running or the car itself collapsing if the welding of electrical wiring or key structural points was not done properly. Converted cars from Subic have been reported suddenly developing engine fire, collapsing on the road or the steering running out of control and direction. Of course, the used car importers will never admit these things and the SBMA does not seem to care.

Trash

In defending their trade, the Subic importers conveniently overlook the environmental impact of imported used cars aside from the smoke-belching factor. As pointed out by Trade Undersecretary Elmer Hernandez recently, the used cars that are imported here from Japan are already considered trash since they are 5 to 7 years old and have reached the end of their life span. Since they are considered trash in Japan, their manufacturers have phased out the production of their replacement parts. Ergo, buyers of these old vehicles will have increasing difficulty finding spare parts, even in junkyards, and this reduces the period of time the vehicle can be driven safely or reliably.

Inevitably, Hernandez said, after a few years converted cars end up in junkyards, rotting there and creating a massive environmental problem. Junked motor vehicles are not marketable as scrap metal, Hernandez explained, since they have a huge paint content. The paint has to be treated first before the metal can be melted, otherwise it will damage the melting process. Hernandez has basis to conclude that the Philippines is becoming a dumping ground of foreign rubbish that adds to our own automobile trash. Small wonder, since we are the only Southeast Asian nation accepting old cars junked by their country of origin.

New tax

The Arroyo administration, grappling with a fiscal crisis created in part by inefficient tax collection, is finally showing the political will to discourage the purchase of imported used cars that is slowly killing the Philippine automobile manufacturing industry. Via an executive order, a P500,000 specific tax will be slapped on imported used cars to cover the environmental hazards that they bring in. Together with the existing 30 percent duty on completely built-up (CBU) vehicles imported from non-Asean countries, the new tax should hike the prices of these vehicles to a million pesos each or more.

However, the government must prepare for a Temporary Restraining Order that the importers and Subic lobby will most likely try to obtain. After all, a TRO is how they succeeded in stopping the Department of Trade and Industry from enforcing the Motor Vehicle Development Program's provision banning the importation of used cars. Meanwhile, if you are shopping for a used car, consider this: What's so smart about buying a converted SUV or minivan from Subic at one-third its local price if you endanger your family's and your own safety every time you drive it?

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A closed mouth gathers no feet.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

Kia bestseller SUV wins 4x4 Magazine's car of the year award

KIA'S bestseller sport utility vehicle, Sorento, has recently won the prestigious 4x4 Magazine's Car of the Year 2004 Award.

The much-coveted title was achieved ahead of other high-profile and more established brands.

Outstanding qualities

The full test report concludes: "Those who are tempted by the Sorento, probably including many newcomers to the sport utility vehicle lifestyle, will quickly appreciate the qualities that lift it to the top of our 4x4 of the Year league table—spaciousness, comfort, driving enjoyment and sheer value for money."

Aptly named for a serene coastal town in Italy, the Sorento boasts of stylish look, abundant space, sturdy body-on-frame design and strong engine performance.

The Sorento's engine satisfies the motorist with its 3.5-liter common rail diesel whose quietness and smoothness elevates diesel performance to new heights by serving up 140 cps of thrust at 3,800 rpm and a generous 32.0 kg m at 2,000 rpm of maximum torque. This results in a 20 percent improvement in fuel efficiency and 50 percent reduction in exhaust fumes.

Inside, the Sorento's seats and rear cargo space adapt to your needs so you can take what you want and where you want. With rear seats upright, you have 31.4 cubic feet of cargo space. This doubles to 66.4 cubic feet when the rear seats are folded.

Safety systems

Equipped with state-of-the-art safety systems, the Sorento's highly rigid welded steel body, mounted to a sturdy ladder frame, is reinforced fore and aft with crumple zones that help preserve cabin integrity.

Doors are fitted with ultrahigh-tension steel that shields passengers against side collision.

Launched in the Philippines at the latter part of last year, the Sorento has been an immediate success and has contributed to Kia's growing position in the global automotive industry.

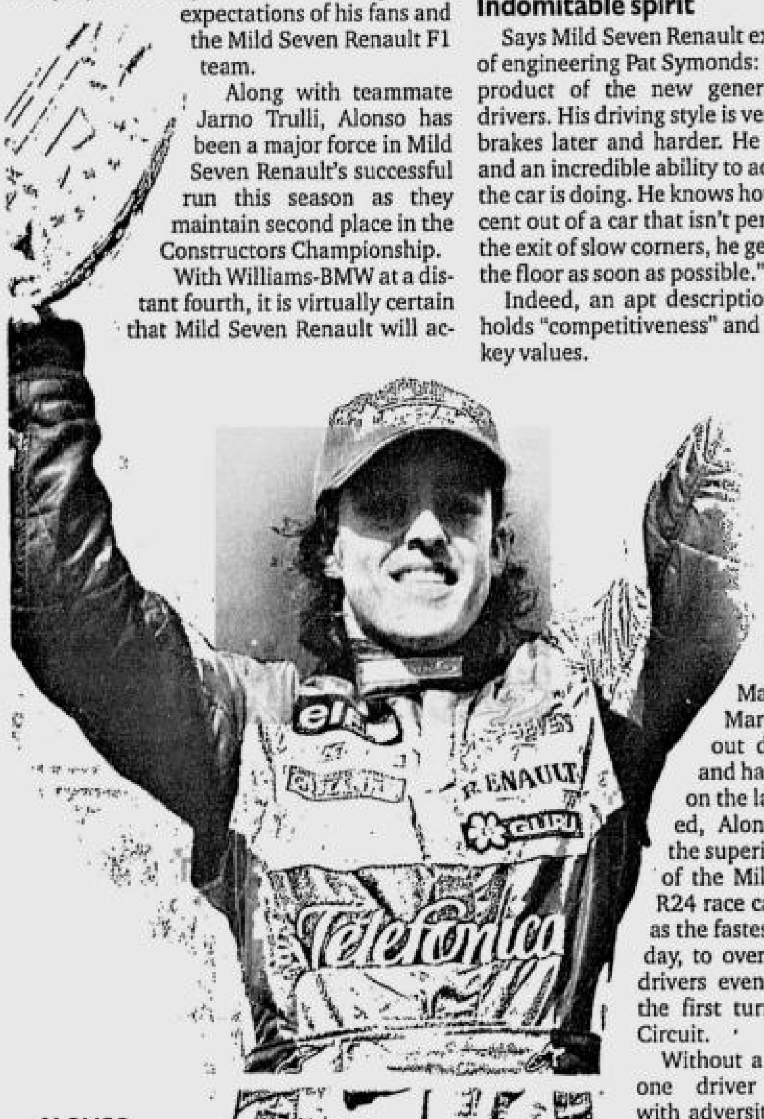
Mild Seven Renault rising star visits Manila on Oct. 2

IN THE RACING world where points are gained and careers lost in mere split seconds, few things are certain. But from the very first time Fernando Alonso sat behind a steering wheel, it was clear that this Spanish hotshot was destined for greatness.

After scoring three podiums in the last five races this season going into the Italian Grand Prix (GP) at Monza, Alonso has lived up to the expectations of his fans and the Mild Seven Renault F1 team.

Along with teammate Jarno Trulli, Alonso has been a major force in Mild Seven Renault's successful run this season as they maintain second place in the Constructors Championship.

With Williams-BMW at a distant fourth, it is virtually certain that Mild Seven Renault will accomplish their goal announced at the beginning of the season which is to finish as one of the Top 3 teams in 2004.



ALONSO

Over the past two seasons with Mild Seven Renault, Alonso has impressed the racing world not only with his breathtaking brand of racing but also his ability to improve constantly.

Indomitable spirit

Says Mild Seven Renault executive director of engineering Pat Symonds: "Fernando is the product of the new generation of racing drivers. His driving style is very aggressive, he brakes later and harder. He has huge talent and an incredible ability to adapt to whatever the car is doing. He knows how to get 100 percent out of a car that isn't perfectly set up. On the exit of slow corners, he gets his foot flat on the floor as soon as possible."

Indeed, an apt description of driver who holds "competitiveness" and "sincerity" as his key values.

It is this sincerity that leads Alonso to confess, "I hate losing." And he makes it a point to back up these words with actions.

During the Malaysian GP last March, Alonso spun out during qualifying and had to start the race on the last row. Undaunted, Alonso leveraged on the superior launch control of the Mild Seven Renault R24 race car, acknowledged as the fastest starter in F1 today, to overtake seven other drivers even before reaching the first turn of the Sepang Circuit.

Without a doubt, Alonso is one driver well-acquainted with adversity. In 2001, Alonso, then an F1 rookie, managed to pilot the underperforming car of the Minardi Team fast enough to finish as one of the top 10 drivers in the sport.

Coming to Manila

After only four years of F1 racing, Alonso has already compiled a resumé that eclipses the achievements of those who have been driving for more than twice as long. In 2003, the Spaniard tucked in a victory at the Hungarian GP and finished on the podium in Malaysia, Brazil and Spain earning him sixth place in the Drivers Championship.

This year, Alonso has made it a point to outdo himself. With four races to go in the 2004 season, he is currently fourth/fifth among all drivers. The 23-year-old driver has finished on the podium four times—in Australia, France, Germany and Hungary. On Oct. 2, in between the maiden race at the Shanghai International Speedway, Jia Ding district, China and the traditional Japanese GP in Suzuka, Alonso will take off his helmet and don another hat... that of an ambassador for F1 to Filipino fans at Play Underground in Powerplant Mall, Rockwell.

Mild Seven Renault makes Alonso the youngest and, at the same time, the most successful F1 driver to ever visit the Philippines. This visit ends that long yearning of passionate Filipino F1 fans to see and meet a top-caliber racer like Alonso who is a top performer and even promises to improve further down the road.

Arriving in Manila together with Alonso are two cars—the real R23 race car and the prototype model of the R24. The prototype is a scale model that was used to develop the R24 race car which is being used by the Mild Seven Renault Team this season.

As the premier educators of F1 in the Philippines, Mild Seven has already mounted a string of successful promos and events carrying F1 racing themes. In 2001, Mild Seven mounted the "Mild Seven SPEEDshow" which introduced local racing aficionados to the R201 team race car. For 2002, the focal point of the "Mild Seven XLR8: The Mild Seven F1 Experience" was Jenson Button and the R202 race car. Last year, Mild Seven Renault test driver Allan McNish came to the Philippines along with the R23B race car.

By bringing in a driver like Alonso with unquestionable talent complemented by boyish good looks and a fun-loving personality, Mild Seven Renault firmly stamps its ownership and commitment to F1 racing by contributing to the rising popularity and ever-increasing fan base of the sport in the Philippines.

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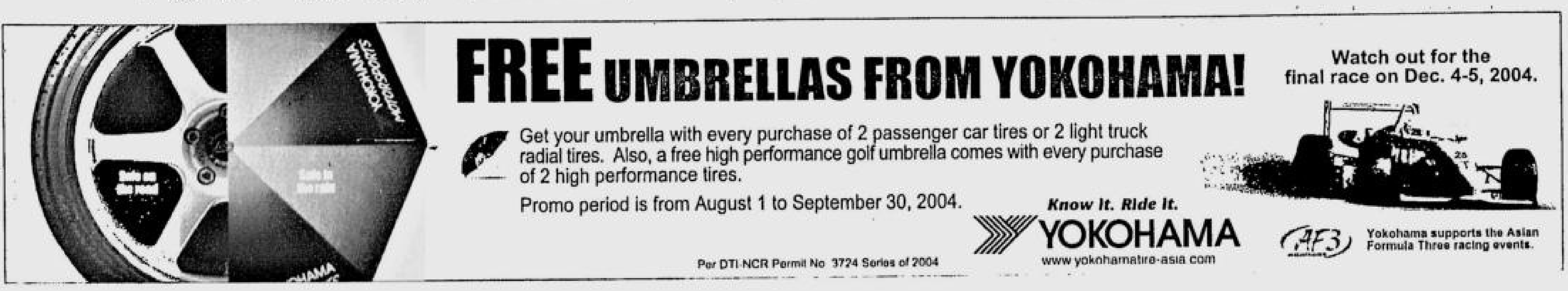
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Why today's generation of diesel engines are 'green'

Text and photos
by Charles E. Buban

(Last of two parts)

THE FUTURE looks bright for diesel-powered vehicles.

LAST March, the country got a glimpse of how today's high-performance diesel engines perform in fuel economy test.

At the end of the three-hour Fuel Economy Run 2004 sponsored by the Department of Energy, an Isuzu Crosswind XUVi Asian utility vehicle, a BMW X5 3.0d sport utility vehicle and a BMW 530d sedan proved to be among the most fuel-efficient as the three consumed a total of only 8.68 liters, 13.93 liters and 8 liters of diesel, respectively.

That translated to an impressive mileage of 19.58 km/L of diesel for the Crosswind, 12.2 km/L for the X5 3.0d, and 21.2 km/L for the 530d.

The three were among the 60-vehicle convoy that traveled—with air-conditioning system, headlights and hazard lights—on a total distance of 170 kilometers at an average speed of 60 km/h with a maximum speed set at 80 km/h.

The Crosswind was powered by a 2.5-liter four-cylinder overhead valve direct injection diesel engine while both BMW entries were powered by a revised in-line six-cylinder diesel engine featuring second-generation common rail technology.

So, what does this economy run prove?

So much has changed

"The results only show that today's generation of diesel engines is no longer your grandfather's diesel engines. So much has changed: modern diesel engines offer high fuel efficiency, low noise and exhaust levels, and improved drivability," said BMW Philippines corporate communications manager Lito German who added that the continuing diesel engine research in Europe helped tremendously.

DIESEL engines are now powerful and yet produce less pollutants.

Resulting advances in diesel design—particularly the injection of fuel directly into the cylinders—have in recent years produced downscaled, higher-speed diesels that offer demonstrable exhaust emissions and fuel-economy gains as well as substantial drivability and noise/vibration/harshness improvements.

"Contrary to what many people think, today's generation of high-performance diesels are not dirty or noisy anymore," claimed German.

In fact, it was in Europe where the common rail direct injection was first developed.

The CRDi is the new-generation state-of-the-art diesel technology that is largely being used by premium cars worldwide.

The core of any CRDi system is that it makes a slow-revving and unresponsive diesel perform like a gasoline engine, without making it lose out on any of its efficiency.

New innovations

Citing the Association of European Automobile Manufacturers (Acea), the new innovations that helped in the development of CR-Di include:

- Turbocharging, which utilizes energy from the engine exhaust to boost performance.
- Common-rail fuel injection, which is an advanced fuel pump technology that is part of the new fuel control system in clean diesel engines. By directly feeding the injectors from a single fuel pump, an electronic system precisely controls the pressure and timing of fuel injection.
- Variable Injection Timing, is another innovation in the new fuel control system in which an electronically controlled high-pressure fuel injector releases the precise amount of fuel at the moment of maximum compression (when the piston reaches the top of the cylinder).
- Diesel particulate filter is another technology that removes particulates from the exhaust by incinerating them. The filter substrate is coated with a precious metal alloy, which, together with controlled multiple injections, triggers the combustion at approximately 600°C.

Continued diesel dev't

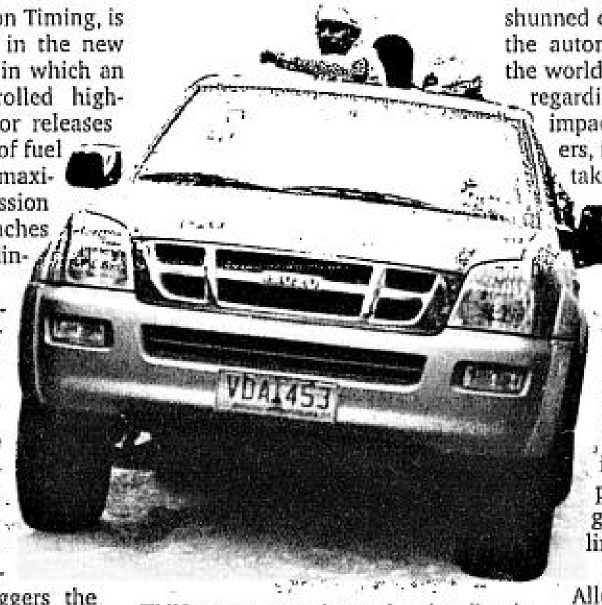
Outside Europe, Japan is another country that has continued the development of diesel engine.

For more than 65 years, Isuzu of Japan has been pioneering numerous technological innovations in the diesel engine field, marking a cumulative total production of over 16 million diesel engines last year.

Isuzu's position as a major diesel engine producer provides the manufacturing clout to offer direct injection at an affordable level.

"Japan wanted to fight the stigma so they looked and developed advanced technologies to make diesel engines cleaner, quieter and more powerful than ever before," said Isuzu Philippines Corp. vice president Ken Takashima.

But Takashima clarified that Isuzu's main purpose was to use direct injection as a way to make their engine's cleaner and perform better than competitors.



THIS country needs tough going diesels with less impact on the environment

Environmental impact

Concern about global warming has brought even greater impetus to eliminate the diesel engine's well-known drawbacks.

The smoke coming out from diesel engines consists of unburnt carbon compounds, nitrogen oxide (NOx), and sulfurous fumes, which are found to be main contributors to air pollution.

Diesel engines emit higher levels of NOx and particulate matter (PM) than gasoline engines.

"This is one reason the market shunned diesel engine. But since the automotive industry shares the world community's concerns regarding the environmental impact, diesel manufacturers, in particular, decided to take appropriate action," said Isuzu Philippines PR manager Timmy Naval.

Diesel engines are currently viewed as having immense potential to help prevent global warming because of their relatively low carbon dioxide emissions—the principal greenhouse gas—compared to gasoline engines.

Executive director Allen Schaeffer of Diesel Technology Forum, a leading information source on clean diesel and energy issues, said that today's diesel vehicles burn on an average 30 percent less fuel.

Quick way

Diesel could be our country's quick way to improve fuel economy and lower the country's pollution levels.

Diesel-powered vehicles are seen by automakers and even some environmentalists as just as promising for the environment as those hybrids (those which combine conventional gasoline engines with an electric motor).

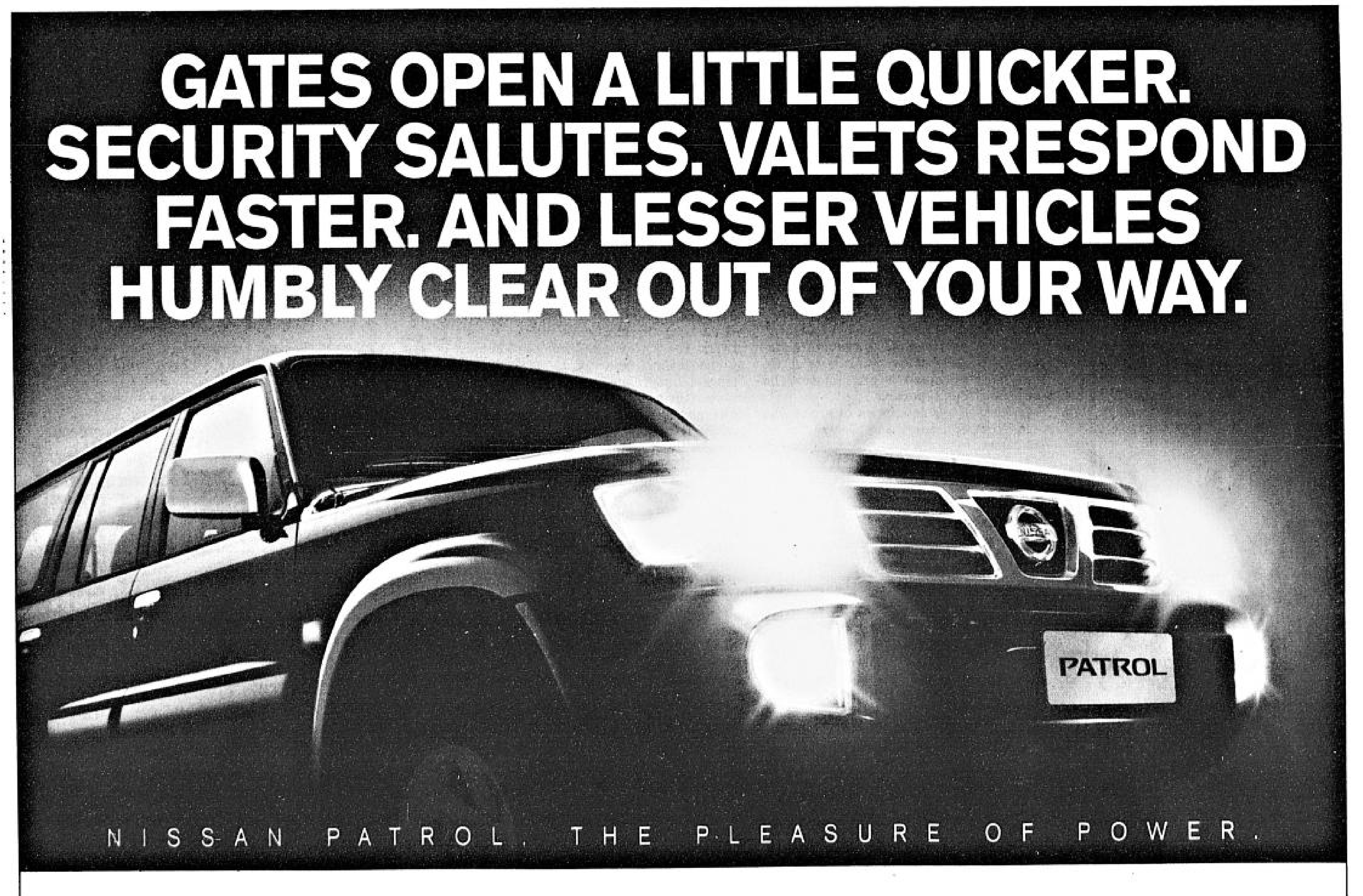
"These missions of boosting fuel economy and cutting greenhouse gases seem to be tailor-made for the diesel," observed Naval.

Much more, the Philippines is now taking a second look at its coconut methyl ester (CME), also known as coco diesel, program in a bid to reduce the country's dependence on imported fuel and create a new market for coconut farmers.

Positive results of various technical tests conducted by the Department of Energy (DOE) recently indicated that the use of coco diesel is most effective in abating atmospheric pollution.

These government tests, which will also ascertain the viability of mandating the use of the fuel for private vehicles, will run until the end of the year.

According to the DOE, coco diesel can be used on diesel vehicles without engine modification and a switch to coco diesel could also help bring down the cost of energy in the country.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WHAT they ate in 1898 /D2

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS ● TUESDAY FITNESS ● WEDNESDAY 2BU ● THURSDAY FOOD ● FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

New comfort (food) zone

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

SOME of my favorite people—brothers Mike, Mark and Beaver Lopez—put up a bistro and bar called Teak in Rockwell. If you love comfort food, this is the place to be for lunch, dinner and beyond.

I was there Saturday and what a gastronomic feast it was! I had the teak platter that serves three with a whole range of appetizers—bruschetta, spring rolls, Buffalo wings, *calamari* fingers, *lechon kawali* plus a Thai salad.

And I didn't stop there. The menu was far too tempting that I had to try Tuna Tartare, *Adobo* flakes and Jackie's *Tinapa* Spring Rolls.

Faces DJ Boyet Almazan played background music that took us way down memory lane with hits from the '70s, '80s and '90s. (He now plays in Teak every Saturday. On Fridays, Manolet Dario brings the house down.)

Great food, wonderful music and the company of old friends... life is indeed all good! To Mike, Mark and Beaver, who have added running a restaurant to the many clever things they do: Welcome to my world! Congratulations!

'Double' isn't double

If I double a recipe do I double the cooking time?

When you double things up, it doesn't necessarily mean you double everything. If you double a recipe, increase the total cooking time by 30 percent. If you're cutting a recipe down to half, reduce the total cooking time by 30 percent.

Iced tea challenge

I love iced tea but I can't seem to make mine taste like those I order in restaurants.

JEFF T.

Iced tea is one of those things we take for granted. We all assume we could make a good glass. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I've had terrible iced tea experiences, in other people's homes, restaurants and even in my house. Thanks to Norma, our beloved brilliant *Manang* of 40 years, I have the tallest iced tea tale to tell.

One fine day, in she came to serve my guest a beverage garnished with a wedge of lemon and a sprig of mint and the stem glass' rim lined with sugar. Oh I was so proud. All that pageantry was possible under my tutelage!

The horror of seeing the tea bag after the guest left... Kankunis! I can't quite remember if I saw that person again or, if I did, if he ever asked for iced tea in my house again.

Iced Tea Concentrate

2 1/2 cups Nestea iced tea mix (lemon or any flavor you want, adjust to taste) or 5 tea bags of choice (use plain tea if adding fruits that don't match the tea base flavor)

1 1/2 cups sugar (adjust to taste)

2 cups boiling water

- Mix sugar and tea with boiling water until dissolved. If using tea bags, let steep in hot water first for 5 minutes. Take tea bags out. Add sugar. A cool mixture.

For variations, still using the concentrate recipe:

- **Citrus Tea** – 1/3 cup lemon, lime or *kalamansi* juice (I use a combination of lemon and lime), sliced lemon, lime or *kalamansi* from juiced fruit, and mint sprigs
- **Honey Iced Tea** – Use honey instead of sugar
- **Mango, *Pomelo*, Peach or Strawberry** – add 1 cup peach or strawberry puree to the tea concentrate. Garnish with sliced mangoes, *pomelo*, peach or strawberries and mint.
- **Orange** – add 1 cup fresh orange juice + 1 orange sliced and mint for garnish
- **Cinnamon Clove Tea** – While concentrate is hot, add 1 cinnamon stick and 6 cloves. Before serving, add 1/2 cup rum or vodka.

Before serving

2 cups cold water

2-3 cups ice cubes

- To concentrate add cold water, ice cubes.
- Transfer to a blender if you wish.
- Add fruit juice or alcohol. Mix well.
- Transfer to a glass or a pitcher and add sliced fruit, mint sprigs and ice cubes.
- Mix and serve.

Dressing up the cook

Would you know where I could get a uniform for our cook? She cooks real well but she doesn't look too good. She's on the heavy side and none of those ready-to-wear uniforms fit her.

Ditas Yatco

Did you want a cook or a model? If the latter, send her to Vicki Belo! But seriously now, get in touch with Japan. He does our uniforms at home. You can ask him to go to your house or you can drop by Christ the King in Greenmeadows where he has a stall. (0919-8493019).

Dinner wine

I'm planning a dinner party? How much wine do I need?

G. UYTENGSU

If you're serving only one kind of wine, count a 1/2 bottle per person. If you are offering 2 kinds, 2 glasses of each type per person. A regular 24-ounce bottle has 6 glasses. All these guidelines, of course, fall under the presumption that your guests are social drinkers!

More food-white wine pairings

Poultry—Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay

Oysters—Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay

Shrimps, Crab, Lobster—Dry Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc

Shellfish—Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc

Seafood in Light Sauce—Dry Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay

Seafood with Cream Sauce—Chardonnay

Grilled fish—Dry Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay

Cream Sauce Pasta—Sauvignon Blanc

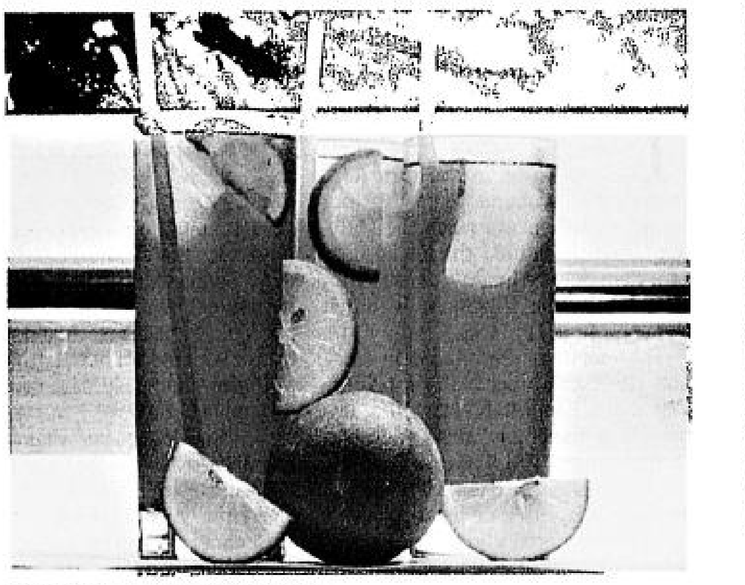
Asian Food—Chenin Blanc, Riesling

Pork—Riesling, Chardonnay

Chocolate—White Riesling

My wine suggestion: Jacob's Creek Riesling—a touch of sweetness to balance the citrus and fruity flavors.

For comments or suggestions, text 0917-8399888.



ICED TEA garnished with lemon

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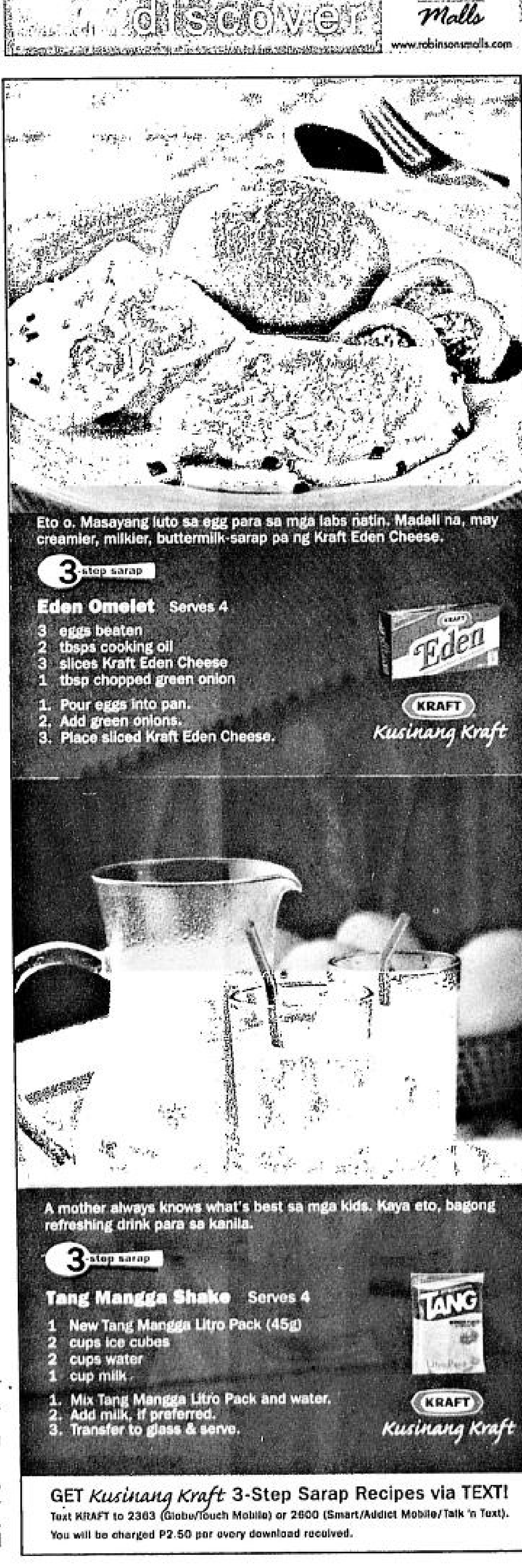

Eto o. Masayang luto sa egg para sa mga labs natin. Madali na, may creamier, milkier, buttermilk-sarap pa ng Kraft Eden Cheese.

3-step sarap

Eden Omelet Serves 4

3 eggs beaten
2 tbsps cooking oil
3 slices Kraft Eden Cheese
1 tbsp chopped green onion

1. Pour eggs into pan.
2. Add green onions.
3. Place sliced Kraft Eden Cheese.

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A mother always knows what's best sa mga kids. Kaya eto, bagong refreshing drink para sa kanila.

3-step sarap

Tang Mangga Shake Serves 4

1 New Tang Mangga Litro Pack (45g)
2 cups ice cubes
2 cups water
1 cup milk

1. Mix Tang Mangga Litro Pack and water.
2. Add milk, if preferred.
3. Transfer to glass & serve.

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H E N Y S I S O N
CULINARY SCHOOL

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

October 1 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **BURGERS & STEAKS By: Chef Jane Paredes**, Food Consultant, trained at the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York & Peter Kump's New York Cooking School* **Burgers:** Italian Burger, Tex Mex Burger, Chicken Burger, Crab Cake Burger & Traditional Beef Burger* **Steaks:** Rib-eye, Tenderloin & T-Bone* **Sauces:** Bercy, Green Peppercorn Sauce & Café de Paris* **Sidings:** Potato Gratin & Potato Puree. **P2,500**

October 2 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. **BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison*** Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. **P1,500**

October 2 (Saturday) 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY RECIPES by: Heny Sison*** Dark Fruitcake, White Fruitcake, Walnut Torte, Rum-Raisin Walnut Cheesecake, Festive Cookie Bar & Prune Bar. **P1,500**

October 4 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **COMMERCIAL BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP by: Chef Jill Sandique**, Food Consultant & Food Stylist, Blue Ribbon graduate at Peter Kump's New York Cooking School* Spanish Bread, Pandesal, Hotdog Bun, Pan de Coco, Choco Bread Hamburger Bun, Meat Roll & Pig Pie plus bonus recipes! **P2,500**

October 5 (Tuesday) 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. **BROWNIE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jill Sandique*** Fudgy Brownies, Chocolate Chip Butter Blondies, Chocolate Chip Walnut Bars, Cappuccino Brownies, Butterscotch Brownies, Marbled Cream Cheese Brownies, Fruit & Nut Bars and White Chocolate Brownies **P2,500**

October 6 (Wednesday) 11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. **KOREAN COOKING I by: Chef Cecile Park**, owner of Silla Korean Restaurant & food consultant to various Korean restaurants in Metro Manila* Beef Bulgogi (Tenderloin & ordinary), Chicken Bulgogi, Pork Bulgogi, Chap Chae, Mi Yuk Guk (Soups: Seasweed, Beef or Tahong), Bibimbap & Kalbi Jim. **P1,700**

October 7 & 8 (Thursday & Friday) 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **CAKE DECORATING COURSE I by: Heny Sison*** Learn the basics of cake decorating: icing, color, star, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping: clowns & booties. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. **Full participation. P4,000**

October 9 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. **FRESH PASTA WORKSHOP by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli**, Master Pizzaiolo & Barista, food consultant of various Italian restaurants all over Metro Manila, graduated at Culinary Institute, Milan, Italy* Learn how to make pasta egg dough, green spinach dough, black pasta dough, different kinds of pastas: lasagna, green lasagna, ravioli, tortellini, cannelloni, fettuccine: green & black, stuffings for ravioli, tortellini and cannelloni. Sauces for lasagna, tortellini, ravioli & cannelloni. Recipes: Lasagna alla Bolognese, Lasagna ai 4 Formaggi, Lasagna al Pesto, Cannelloni alla Ricotta and Spinaci, Ravioli alla Boscaiola al Burro e Salvia, Tortellini ai 4 Formaggi, alla Panna Prosciutto e Funghi, Green Fettuccine alla Montanara, Black Fettuccine ai Frutti di Mare. Demonstration with student participation. **P2,500**

October 11 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *New Class* **ORGANIC COOKING FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: NON-VEGETARIAN COOKING CLASS by: Jacqueline Haessig Alleje**, owner of Rizal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pinoy restaurateur (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Petra's naturally green, global, gourmet).* Recipes: Tuna Tartar on Cucumber Dressing, Carrot and Almond Soup (with vegetable stock recipe), Grilled Salmon Fillet in Mango Juice, Swiss Cheese Cake (Quark Cake), Mango Passion Salad, Rosemary Steak with Cabbage Potatoes and Mango Bavarian Cream. **P1,700**

October 12 (Tuesday) 10:00 - 4:00 p.m. *New Class* **DIFFERENT CHOCOLATE CAKES by: Chef Jacqueline Ang Po**, Pastry Chef of Fleur de Lys Patisserie, dean's list graduate, California Culinary Academy * Chocolate Fudge Cake, Flourless Chocolate Walnut Cake, Sachertorte, German Chocolate Cake and Warm Chocolate Souffle Cake. **P1,500**

October 13 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **SECRETS NO MORE! by: Heny Sison*** Decadent Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing & Caramel Sauce, Lemon Torte, Ensaymada, Almond Sanznval, Strawberry Shortcake & Ube Cake **P3,000**

October 14 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING: WORKSHOP by: Chef Koichi Kondo**, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants.* Learn all-time favorites Japanese dishes applicable to home & professional cooking such as: Sushi, Sashimi, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodles in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice. **P2,500**

October 15 (Friday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **PARADE OF PIES, TARTS, CHEESECAKES by: Heny Sison*** French Apple Pie with Streusel Topping and Crème Anglaise Sauce, Turtle Pie, Banana Cream Pie with Whipped Cream and Caramel Topping, Mango Tart, Peach Walnut Pie, Blueberry Cheesecake and White Chocolate Cheesecake. **P1,700**

October 16 (Saturday) 1:30 - 5:00 p.m. **BASIC RESTAURANT SERVICE SKILLS by:** Cecile Mauricio, former editor of Mabuhay Philippines (Philippine Airlines' in-flight magazine), is a communications and marketing consultant for various restaurants.* Restaurant staff who can communicate well is the key to improved sales and service. A concise workshop for new waiters and waitresses, new restaurant owners, or a refresher course for regular staff. Course outline: Communication Skills, Personality Development, Customer Service, Sales & Marketing Concepts and Service Strategies. **P1,000**

October 18 (Monday) 10:00 - 4:00 p.m. *New Class* **ORGANIC COOKING FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: VEGETARIAN COOKING CLASS by: Jacqueline Haessig Alleje Recipe:** Balsamic Marinated Grilled Vegetables, Okra Tomato Soup (with vegetable stock recipe), 1001 Nights - Vegetarian Delight (can be prepared as salad or hot dish), Sweet Potato and Mushroom Medley, Tofu Mushroom Burger with Chunky Tomato Sauce & Organic Brown Rice and Ube Pudding. **P1,700**

October 19 (Tuesday) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. *New Class* **EASY BAKING FOR CHRISTMAS by: Jacqueline Ang Po** * Caramel Popcorn, Crinkles, Fudge Brownies, Chocolate Cookies, Cocoa Truffle and Pineapple Ice Box Cake. **P1,500**

October 20 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **DOUGHNUT WORKSHOP by: Chef Jane Paredes** * Recipes: Sugar, Honey - Glazed, Caramel Pecan, Chocolate Nut, Mango Glazed, Chocolate Bavarian, Blueberry Filled, Strawberry Filled, Apple Filled, Twist Cinnamon Sugar, Dulce de Leche, Cream Cheese Honey, Boston Cream, Sour Cream Cake Doughnut & Creamy Glazed. **P2,500**

October 21 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m **COOKIE BARS FOR SELLING by:** Chef Jane Paredes * Chocolate Revel Bars, Fudge Brownies, Pecan Bars, Oatmeal Raisin Bars and Lemon Bars. **P1,500**

October 21 (Thursday) 1:30 - 5:00 p.m. *New Class* **DELI SANDWISHES & SALADS by: Chef Jane Paredes** * This class will teach you how to prepare & package deli-style sandwiches & salads for take out counter & food to go. Recipes: Assorted Cold Cuts, Chicken Pastrami, Tuna-Apple, Grilled Eggplant & Cheese, Crabstick Salad, Homemade Potato Salad, Aioli Dip with Potato Chips, Fresh Fruit Compote and Garden Green Salad. **P1,700**

October 22 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *New Class* **THANKSGIVING FEAST by: Chef Jane Paredes/ Mr. Ben Go** *The pleasure of your company is requested as we unfold the secrets to easy entertaining. A duo class with Chef Jane and Ben Go (Creative and Marketing consultant for various companies & events including A Taste of Life with Heny Sison). In this class students will prepare a 5-course menu and table set-up with centerpiece (floral arrangement) presentation. The highlight of this class is a sit-down dining experience in the late afternoon. **Full Participation.** *Recipes:* Mango-Salsa, Homemade Boursin, Eggplant Caviar, Melba Toasts, Garden Green Salad w/Fruit Dressing, Pumpkin Soup w/ Bacon Bits, Roast Turkey with 2-sausage paella stuffing served w/ cranberry & giblet sauces, White Chunk Macadamia Tart w/ Vanilla- Black Pepper Ice Cream. **P3,800**

October 23 (Saturday) 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. *New Class* **THAI SPECIALTIES WORKSHOP: PART 3 by: Chef Dino Guingona**, graduate of California Culinary Academy and at the Thai Cooking School in Chiangmai. * The class starts with a visit to the Farmers market in Cubao Q.C. led by Chef Dino Guingona, students will learn the proper selection and buying of ingredients. The rest of the morning will be spent on the preparation, afterwhich each participants gets to whip up Thai specialties such as: Recipes: Pomelo Salad with Prawns and Crabstick, Parrot Fish (Tom Yum), Crispy Fried Noodles (Mee Krop), Thai Spring Rolls (Po-pia Thot) and Sticky Rice Pudding with Mangoes. **P2,500**

October 25 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. *New Class* **FILIPINO DESSERTS FOR CHRISTMAS by: Chef Jacqueline Ang Po** * Banana Walnut Cake, Polvoron, Puto Bumbong, Royal Bibingka and Yema. **P1,500**

October 26 (Tuesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **SIOPAO & MAMI WORKSHOP by: Chef Katherine Sion** *Chicken Bola-Bola Pao, Asado Pao, Bola-bola Pao, Jumbo Siopao with Chinese Sausage, Chicken Asado Mami & Beef Mami. **P2,500**

October 27 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **PIZZA CLASS WORKSHOP by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli** * In this class you will learn the history, concept and design of pizza making. Learn how to make pizza dough, tomato base sauce, white sauce base, preparation, set up pizza counter, know the ingredients and toppings. Recipes: Margherita, Napoli Classica, 4 Formaggi, Pizza Vegetariana, La Gibana, Piccantina, 4 Stagioni, Calzone & Frutti di Mare. Demonstration with student participation. **P2,500**

October 27 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **TART WORKSHOP by: Heny Sison** *Macapuno Tarts, Cashew Tart, Mango Tart, Pili Tart and Egg Tart. **P2,500**

October 28 (Thursday) 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **JAPANESE RICE TOPPINGS by: Chef Koichi Kondo**, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan & food consultant to various Japanese restaurants in Metro Manila. **Recipes :** Oyako-don (Chicken & Egg on Rice), Gyudon (Beef Bowl), Ten-don (Tempura Bowl), Katsu-don (Pork Cutlet Bowl), Soboro-don (Minced Chicken & Egg Bowl), Ton Teriyaki-don (Chicken Teriyaki) plus bonus Recipe : Chahan (Japanese Fried Rice). **P1,700**

October 28 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **DIMSUM 1 by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Congee, Siomai, Dumpling, Chicken Feet, Fried Shrimp Ball and Buchi. **P1,500**

October 29 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m **POPULAR CHINESE DISHES FOR CATERING I by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Sweet Corn Soup with Crabmeat, Braised Pata Tim with Vegetables, Saute Shrimps with Greenpeas & Quail Egg, Peking Noodles with Chopsuey, Fried Rice with Assorted Meats, Fried Crispy Chicken Chinese Style & Buchi. **P1,700**

October 30 (Saturday) 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **PAELLAS Y MAS (Paellas & More!) by: Chef Ed Quimson**, is a seasoned master chef of Spanish origin, creator of RASTRO Tapas Bar & Restaurant at Rockwell and Chef Ed's Restaurant at Salcedo Village, Makati City. He has also lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, The Nielsen Tower, the Member's Lounge of the Phil. Stock Exchange & the Subic Yacht Club. *Recipes:* Paella Negra (w/ squid ink), Paella Mar y Montana, Paella Catalana (Sin Tropezones), Paella Sevillana (Vegetarian), Paella Con Setas y Mejillones, Ensalada Especial & Pescado ala Sal. **Full participation. P2,500.**

HENY SISON AT JULIUS MAGGI KITCHEN
NESTLE BLDG. # 31 PLAZA DRIVE, ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI CITY

October 11 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. **BAKE SALE FOR CHRISTMAS** * Banana Nut Cake with Pecan Bourbon Sauce, Moist Carrot Cake, Pecan Turtle Bar, Pecan Pie, New York Cheesecake and Super Thin Oatmeal Raisin Cookies. **P1,500**

October 25 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. **BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS** * Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. **P1,500**

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The Malolos banquet revisited

By Ambeth Ocampo

THE CELEBRATIONS held on Sept. 29, 1898 have come down to us in the form of a menu that documents what our founding fathers ate when the Malolos Congress ratified the declaration of independence made from the window of Emilio Aguinaldo's Kawit home on June 12, 1898.

The menu, as reproduced in black and white in Harper's "History of the War in the Philippines" (1900), is also notable as one of the landmark designs by Arcadio Arellano. The cover is in the form of a Philippine flag with the words Solemne ratificacion de la independencia (Solemn ratification of independence).

This flag opens to reveal the date Sept. 29, 1898, and a menu in French. It is proof that ordinary things sound better or more elegant in French.

Even in plain English the menu remains grand. For starters, they had: oysters, prawns, buttered radish, olives, Lyon sausages, Sardines in tomato sauce and Holland salmon. The main courses consisted of crab in its shell, vol-au-vent a la financiere, Chicken giblets a la Tagale, mutton chops with potato straws, truffled turkey a la Manilloise, filet a la Chateaubriand with green vegetables and cold ham with asparagus. For dessert, there were: cheese, fruits, frozen strawberry preserves and ice cream.

To wash down all seven appetizers, seven courses and assortment of four desserts, one progressed from Bordeaux to Sauterne, Sherry, Champagne, Chartreuse and Cognac. And finally, then as now, the feast is capped by coffee or tea.

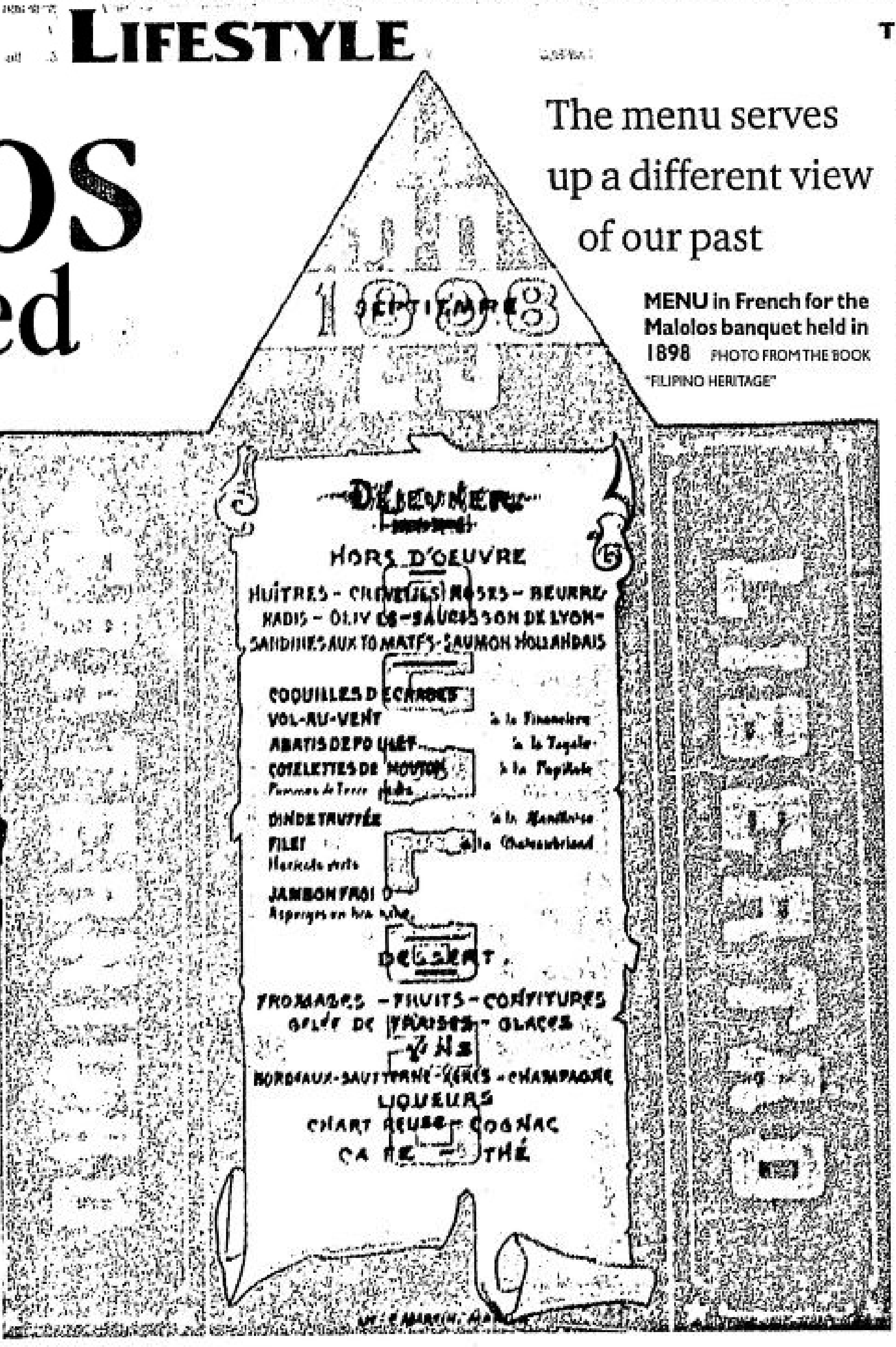
So impressed was Nick Joaquin that he wrote "the menu is a culmination, like Malolos itself, and should stand side by side with the Malolos Constitution."

During the heady days of the 1998 Philippine Centennial, I was tempted to agree with Joaquin, but when the above menu was recreated by Gene Gonzalez of Café Ysabel, the foreign chef of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, and even a restaurant in Davao reviewed by Amando Doronila, certain questions arose.

Intriguing

Where did they get the ice cream? Did they even have ice to chill the champagne? How come there is no soup in this grand menu? Did people actually eat everything listed in the menu or was food passed around in *bandejados*?

Perhaps the founding fathers served themselves from a buffet table very much as we would pig out today in an eat-all-you-can promotion. What kind of cheese was served and where did it come from? Was it Philippine mozzarella, better known as *quesong puti*, or was it an imported cheese? Only the salty and hard queso de bola could withstand the long voyage and tropical heat.



1898
SEPTIEMBRE

DÉJEUNER

HORS D'OEUVRE

HUÎTRES - CREVETTES ROSES - BEURRE
RADIS - OLIVES - SAUCISSON DE LYON -
SARDINES AUX TOMATES - SAUMON HOLLANDAIS

COQUILLES D'ECRABES
VOL-AU-VENT à la Financière
ABATIS DE POULET à la Tagale
COTELETTES DE MOUTON à la Papillote
Pommes de Terre paille
DINDE TRUFFÉE à la Manilloise
FILET à la Chateaubriand
Haricots verts
JAMBON FROID
Asperges en branches

DESSERT

FROMAGES - FRUITS - CONFITURES
GELÉE DE FRAISES - GLACES

VINS

BORDEAUX - SAUTERNE - XÉRÈS - CHAMPAGNE

LIQUEURS

CHARTREUSE - COGNAC
CAFÉ - THÉ

MENU in French for the Malolos banquet held in 1898 PHOTO FROM THE BOOK "FILIPINO HERITAGE"

> The menu serves up a different view of our past

Then there are the ingredients not normally found in Malolos: asparagus, olives or truffles? Did these come fresh? I am tempted to say fresh from the can.

What makes the menu intriguing is that we have a description of the food, the fancy names for the dishes, but don't quite know exactly what these were.

Glorified dishes

Some imagination is required to recreate the feast.

Could the Coquilles de Crabes simply be a *sosyal* way of referring to crab in its shell? While Gene Gonzalez whipped up a stuffed crab, a *relleno* with gratin or browned topping in 1998, I couldn't help wondering if this was just plain *rellenong alimango*, the same recycled dish we serve for breakfast with flaked leftover crab from a party.

Could the Abatis de Poulet a la Tagale be what the late Doreen Fernandez and I believe was probably an elaborate, glorified *adobong manok*? That it was fashioned a la Tagale probably means it had *atay* (liver) and *balunbalunan* (gizzard). These choice bits remind us of the opening of Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere," where *tinolang manok* is served and Ibarra draws a leg and giblets from the tureen, leaving a miserable chicken wing and neck for the irritable Padre Damaso.

The Malolos menu is not just a record of what the founding fathers ate in 1898; it is a different kind of historical document that brings out a different view of our past. Food is so ordinary it is often overlooked by historians, but the Malolos banquet proves that history can be found in places other than dusty books and crumbling archival documents.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Making LPG use safer

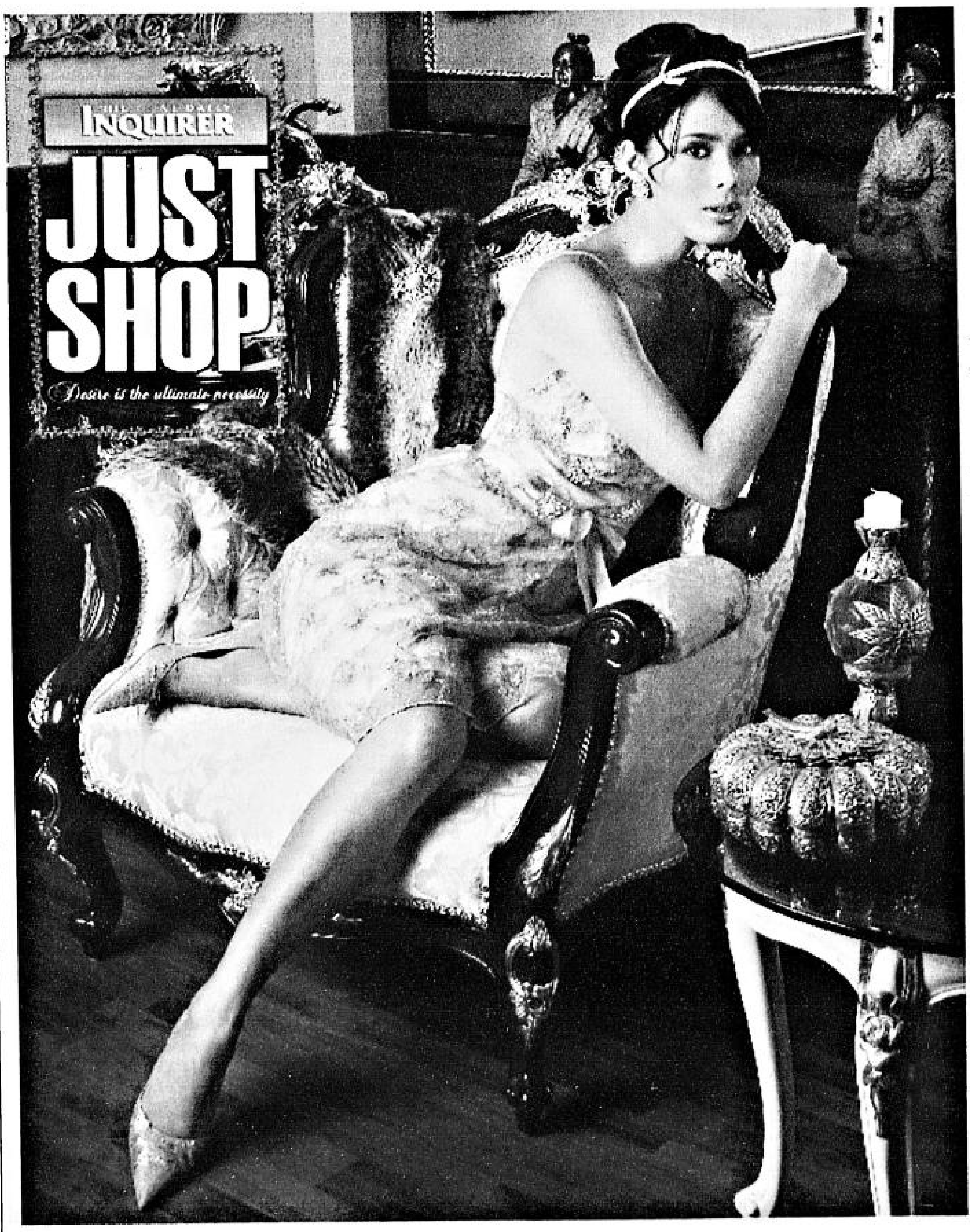
From page D4

ed by the Archdiocese of Manila together with the Jesuit Communication Center. This allows the Catholic community a new medium of Prayer, Reflection, and Interaction. This is a one-time, one-step registration process. These are subscription-based services wherein the subscriber needs to initiate its activation to trigger receipt of messages. Subscriber will just have to type AMEN and send it to 2371. This is also charged P2.50 per message."

Letter-writer lindab@wave.com.ph, after reading Globe's reply to her query coursed through us, asks why she did not get this explanation before. In fact on Aug. 19, she got this message in her mobile: "You too can send text-msgs for FREE. Visit www.chikka.com. Your ID is 639178314639 and your password is f02803."

Other mobile phone users say the service is free if you are the one sending the messages but the recipient pays when—or if—he/she responds. Moreover, the fee that the recipient is charged for responding to the message is higher (P2.50) compared to regular messages which usually cost P1 each.

'Lindab' says she is glad to be enlightened on this so she can avoid "inflicting" on her unsuspecting friends the "free service" she is supposed to enjoy.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A sunny kalabasa pasta

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

THOUGH it may be easier to buy ready-made pasta, you can get immense satisfaction from making it at home, from the hushed rhythms of kneading the dough and rolling it out, and from the intense concentration involved in cutting the pasta.

If you make your own pasta, you can have the precise shape you want and flavors that are not available in stores.

That's how chef Margarita Fores concocted Il Sole, a *kalabasa tortelloni* with white bean, roasted garlic and poached egg filling. The squash-flavored pasta is made from scratch so you're guaranteed that it's fresh and delicious.

Tortelloni, as everybody knows, is a hat-shaped stuffed pasta, similar to ravioli. This simple recipe calls for eggs, all-purpose flour with a pinch of salt and pureed squash. According to Fores, just peel and dice the squash, discarding seeds and strings, and boil the pieces in lightly salted water for about half an hour.

Drain the pieces well and blend them. Should the paste be too liquid, reheat the pasta, stirring briskly, until it has thickened.

Il Sole can be quite tedious to make because, apart from making the pasta from scratch, you still have to stuff it. But what makes it interesting is the rich filling that's made of mashed white beans and one whole organic egg from Abra poached to perfection.

The dish is then covered in creamy sage-butter sauce with a hint of truffle oil. It's finally garnished with carabao butter from Nueva Ecija and Manchego cheese shavings.

Il Sole at Pepato (tel. no. 7572636) is just one of the featured dishes at Savour Nature Food Festival ongoing until Sept. 30 at Greenbelt 2 and 3. The fundraising festival is a project of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International, the global conservation organization.

This year, the event is co-presented with Ayala Land Inc., the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Globe Platinum and Metro Magazine. Some 30 Greenbelt 2 and 3 food and drink establishments have created unique dishes as a salute to nature's bounty.

Diners who want to try the Savour Nature dishes can still get the Panda Card at only P100 from the WWF booth in Greenbelt 3 and selected restaurants. Every order of a festival dish earns the cardholder one signature. Three signatures entitle one to join the Oct. 4 raffle and win prizes like trips to Puerto Princesa and Dumaguete City.

The Panda Card also gives the holder a 50-percent discount on WWF's membership fee. Membership in the conservation organization means invitations to WWF trips and activities.

A Launch Card, now priced at P1,000, also entitles the holder to one free sampling of a festival dish upon ordering a main dish at the participating restos and bars.

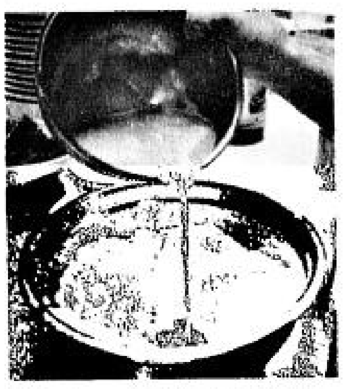
Food Magazine is giving the Food Magazine Editor's Pick Award to the most inventive festival main dish. Metro Magazine will present Metro's Pick Award for the best non-main dish. Recipients of the awards will each receive an artwork from sculptor and architect Lor Calma. Call 9207931 or 9207923.

Ingredients
For pasta dough:
2 large eggs
300 g all-purpose flour
200 g pureed fresh squash
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper

Filling:
120 g white beans, boiled and mashed
25 g roasted garlic puree
6 pcs organic egg
Manchego cheese shavings
Carabao butter
Truffle oil, drizzle

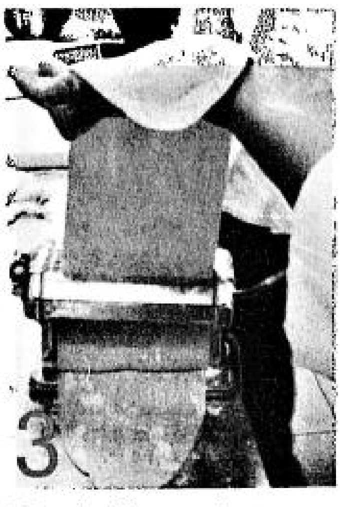
For suggestions, e-mail vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

STEP BY STEP



TO make pasta dough: combine pureed squash with flour in a bowl. Add two eggs, olive oil, pepper and salt. Mix well.

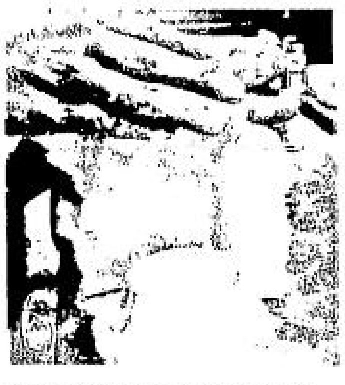
IN a lightly floured flat surface, fold, knead and twist the dough until you get a supple, slightly elastic ball. Don't overknead. Rest for 10 minutes. Then slice dough in half.



TO make thin pasta sheet, pass the dough through the rollers of a pasta-making machine. Roll dough several times until it is very smooth. Meanwhile, make white bean mixture by mashing and adding roasted garlic.

THEN, place sheet of the dough on a tortelloni molding cup. Add mashed beans in the center.

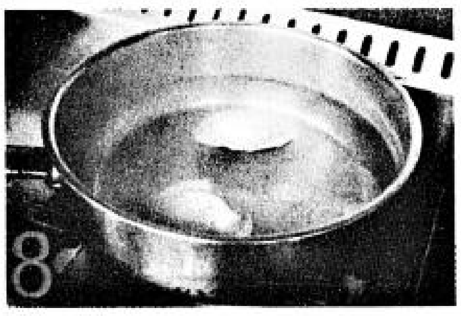
ADD organic egg.



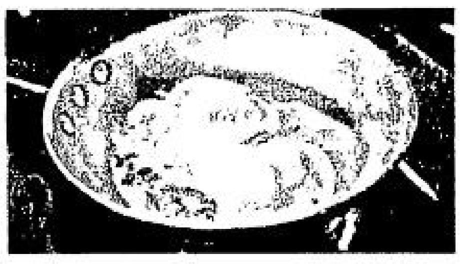
COVER the filled pasta with the remaining dough.

USING a ring molder, press the edges of tortelloni firmly. Remove excess dough and use to make another tortelloni.

By making your own noodles, you can have the precise shape and flavors you want

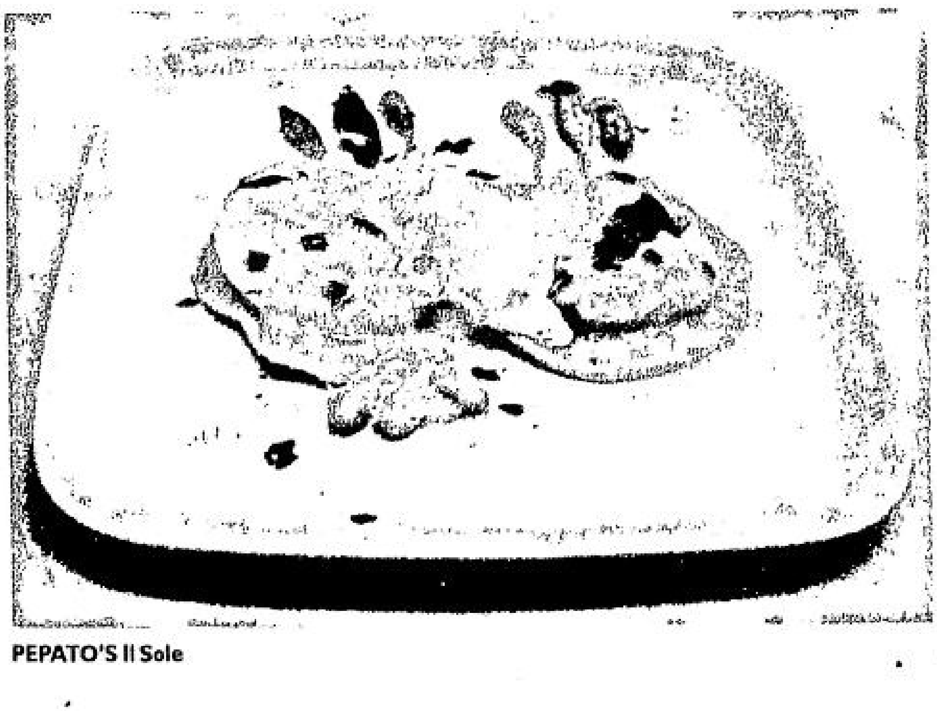


POACH tortelloni in salted, boiling water for 2-3 minutes stirring very gently and occasionally to make sure they do not stick to each other. Set aside.



TO make sage-butter sauce, place 2 tbsp butter in a pan. Add sage and salt and pepper to taste. Add tortelloni and let the butter coat the pasta.

TRANSFER to a serving platter. Garnish with Manchego shavings and fried sage. Put carabao butter in the center and drizzle with truffle oil. Season with freshly ground pepper and serve immediately.



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Making LPG use safer

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

WE DON'T mind repeating all those safety precautions on the use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and we advise consumers to take them to heart.

As the Department of Trade and Industry explained recently, the smallest LPG tank weighing 2.7 kilos had a destructive impact similar to two grenades. Imagine the force of the common household 11-kg LPG cylinder.

The impact, says DTI's special LPG monitoring and operations teams, is equivalent to 10 grenades!

Unfortunately, hundreds of LPG tanks in the market do not undergo the quality test procedure required by DTI-Bureau of Product Standards. DTI Undersecretary for Consumer Welfare Adrian S. Cristobal Jr. disclosed recently that over 500 substandard LPG tanks had been confiscated from retail outlets in Metro Manila. The agency has an ongoing campaign to flush out unsafe LPG tanks from the market.

Cristobal warned that stores selling substandard tanks were violating the product quality and safety provisions of the consumer law.

He also announced that the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Albay offered to keep an eye on unscrupulous LPG refillers and distributors in the province.

Cristobal mentioned that recent incidents of house fires, including the one in Singalong, Manila last month, were believed to have been caused by gas leaks from dilapidated LPG tanks.

Safety precautions

"The rule of thumb is that LPG tanks should be in a well ventilated place, ideally the dirty kitchen," advised the local association of LPG distributors. That certainly poses a big problem for most Metro Manila residents who live in typical homes with closed-in kitchens. Be that as it may, here are the experts' observations and their tips on preventing disaster:

The biggest factor in LPG-related fires is gas leak from a break or a hole in the hose, not from the tank or cylinder. Make sure you close the tank valve after cooking. Check again if it is closed before leaving the house or retiring for the night. Should there be a leak in the hose, the closed valve will seal in the gas and prevent it from spreading in the room.

"Call the distributor right away if you smell gas emission," the experts said. They added that leaking gas would accumulate within a closed room so fast, and build up a combustible force that could ignite with one flick of a light switch. The experts warned, "Never, ever, light a match or a lighter when you smell a gas leak."

The LPG experts also noted that boiling liquid from a pot would spill over and douse the stove fire. If the pot was unattended and forgotten, the open stove would continue to emit gas. "After one hour, the gas can accumulate in the house and ignite with the mere flick of an electrical switch."

We will add more safety tips as we get them from the LPG experts.

From our mailbag

From G. de Guzman, Globe subscriber: "Thanks to Globe customer service for responding to my complaint about unsolicited ring tones. I received a ring tone yesterday and found there was no deduction from my load. I also received a text informing me that I would no longer receive ring tones from sender 2929."

Anna Carmina T. Landrito of Globe Telecom Customer Service responds to a subscriber's query about the item in her bill that read "Mobile Instant Messaging and Catxtcism":

Mobile Instant Messaging and Catxtcism are two of the Chikka services that we are offering.

Instant Messaging is a Mobile Messaging system that allows PC and mobile clients to communicate with one another in real-time anywhere, anytime. You can send messages to a PC from your mobile and receive messages from a PC and mobile as well. The subscriber will be charged P2.50 every time he/she sends a text message from his/her phone, whether or not you are a registered Instant Messenger user. There are no charges.for incoming text messages. There are also no charges when sending a message from one's PC to another PC using this service, but the PC credits are the ones being used up when sending a message from a PC to a mobile phone. To register, subscriber will type IM and send it to 2371.

On the other hand, Catxtcism was initiat-

MAKING/ D2

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AN ASIAN feast fit for Filipino gourmands

Salud to good health and great taste

This destination restaurant in Laguna offers Pinoy cuisine, using the best organic ingredients

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

ONE OF Baguio City's best restaurants is moving closer to Manila. Paul and Nina Poblador, the husband-and-wife team behind the successful Salud Bistro up north, will open a second outlet in San Pablo, Laguna, next month.

The new venture will be called Kusina Salud. In lieu of French cuisine, Paul and his team, led by head chef Bho Sorrera, will be serving honest-to-goodness Filipino food using mostly organic ingredients.

Located several meters from the main highway, the restaurant in Barangay Sta. Cruz Putol is surrounded by organic farms—from vegetable farmers to hog and chicken raisers. It also has easy access to fresh seafood from nearby provinces such as Batangas and Quezon.

"These farmers grow vegetables and livestock the way it was done a century ago—sans chemicals and additives," says Paul. "The food takes twice as long to grow, but they're also twice as tasty and nutritious."

As chef de cuisine, Paul will be in charge of budgeting and fine-tuning the menu. Since he'll be shuttling between Baguio and San Pablo (he's also a consultant for Oh my Gulay and Ang Lounge), he has given Sorrera a free hand to manage Kusina Salud's day-to-day affairs.

"This time," says Paul of Sorrera, who earned his chops working for such restaurants as Chicken Bacolod, Madrigal Grille, Crab and Grille and Graci's Café, "Bho is going to lead the way in terms of Filipino food. He has the experience, the tongue and the talent for it."

And unlike its predecessor, Kusina Salud has done away with a menu, as it plans to serve lunch and dinner buffet-style to groups of 20 or more people. Dishes will be a revolving concern, as they will depend on the availability of ingredients, but Sorrera will cook them the "Asian way."

"The food will be continuously changing, which is another Salud trademark," says an amused Paul. "We've done away with laminating a permanent menu. What for? Everything will be simply written down on paper."

A typical buffet consists of a seven-course meal that's "home-cooked and rustic." In other words, says Paul, "simple yet polished" Filipino dishes without that rich, buttery aftertaste associated with hotel food.

At a recent private lunch for friends and members of the media, Paul and his staff served *sinigang na lapu-lapu* and organic *mustasa sa miso*, chicken *inasal*, *humba* and *ginataan sitaw at kalabasa* with freshwater shrimps.

Due to his stint at Chicken Bacolod, the *inasal* or *inihaw* Ilonggo-style is decidedly one of Sorrera's signature dishes. Before it was fire-grilled, the chicken was marinated in a mixture of vinegar, calamansi juice, ginger and garlic, which explains its unique taste.

The *humba*, which consisted of pieces of organic pork, was cooked in sugar and soy sauce and garnished with black beans, wood ear mushrooms and spring onions. The pork had a melt-in-your-mouth goodness, as it was cooked in slow fire.

"That's one quality of organic pork which sets it apart from ordinary pork," says Paul, who cites the restaurant's pork and seafood dishes as its specialties. "We actually tried to pressurecook it once, but everything—from the meat to the bone—literally fell to pieces."

As much as they'd like vegetables to be the featured dishes, says Paul, they have decided to cater to the Pinoy penchant for eating meat. Aside from *humba*, trust such meaty staples as *patatim*, *pochero* and *kare-kare* to make an appearance in the future.

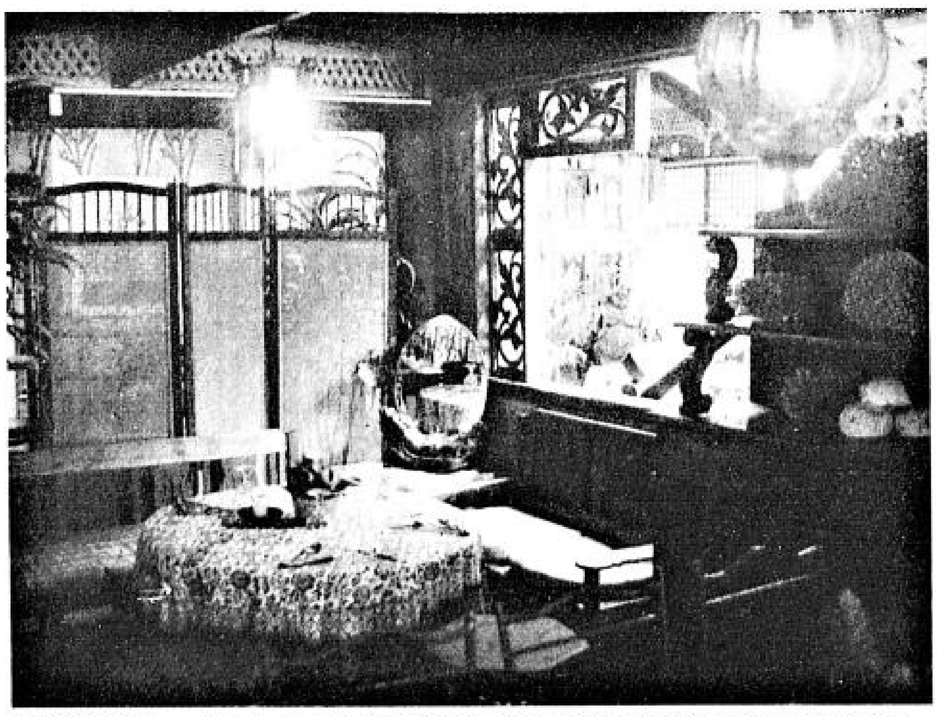
"Just like in Baguio," he adds, "people are probably bound to ask us what our specialty is. We try our best to make each dish special."

As the restaurant needs a minimum number of people to enable it to charge P400 per head, interested parties need to make reservations in advance. Diners, however, need not belong to a single group.

Going Asian, by the way, is simply in keeping with the venue's lush garden setting, which can easily accommodate 150-200 people (the Pobladors are open to weddings and private parties). Thanks to a two-story wooden and bamboo structure made mostly from parts of old homes, the place is an attraction in itself.

Friends of Nina's mother, fashion designer

SALUD/ E3



CUSTOMERS can experience a rustic dining experience amid eclectic interiors only fashion designer Patis Tesoro can think of.

Gourmet Classes with Chef Dennis Hipolito

#137 9th Street corner Balete Drive, New Manila, Quezon City

About Chef Dennis: [illegible] graduate of the Culinary Institute of America [illegible]

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October 16, 2004: EARLY CHRISTMAS GOODIES (Easy Yet Great)
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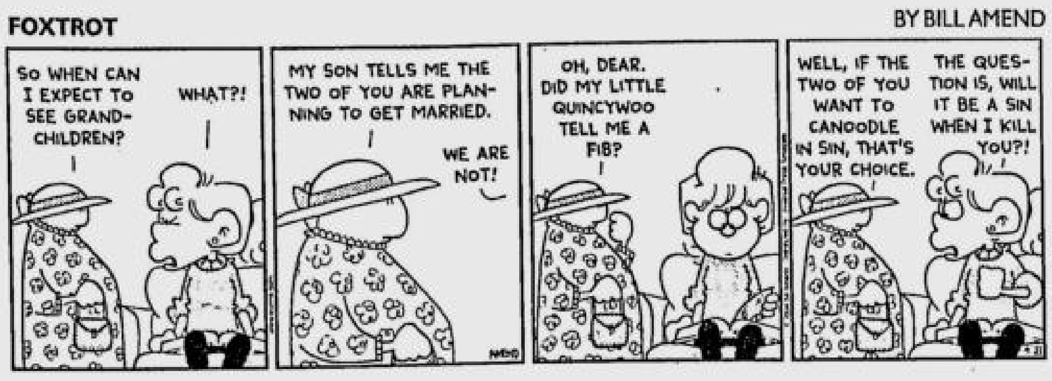
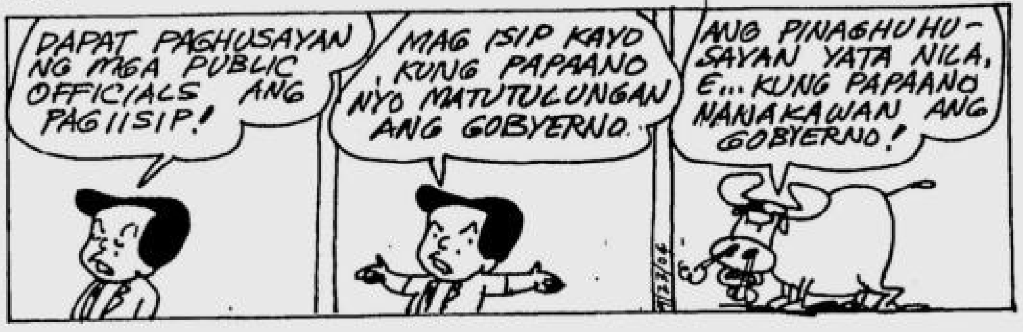
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


So WHEN CAN I EXPECT To SEE GRAND-CHILDREN?
WHAT?!
MY SON TELLS ME THE TWO OF YOU ARE PLANNING TO GET MARRIED.
WE ARE NOT!
OH, DEAR. DID MY LITTLE QUINCYWOO TELL ME A FIB?
WELL, IF THE TWO OF YOU WANT TO CANOODLE IN SIN, THAT'S YOUR CHOICE.
THE QUESTION IS, WILL IT BE A SIN WHEN I KILL YOU?!

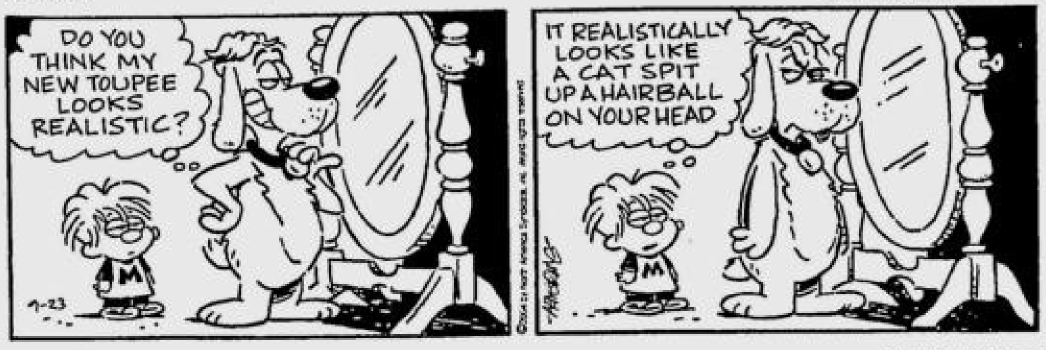
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DAPAT PAGHUSAYAN NG MGA PUBLIC OFFICIALS ANG PAG IISIP!
MAG ISIP KAYO KUNG PAPAANO NYO MATUTULUNGAN ANG GOBYERNO.
ANG PINAGHUHUSAYAN YATA NILA, E... KUNG PAPAANO NANAKAWAN ANG GOBYERNO!

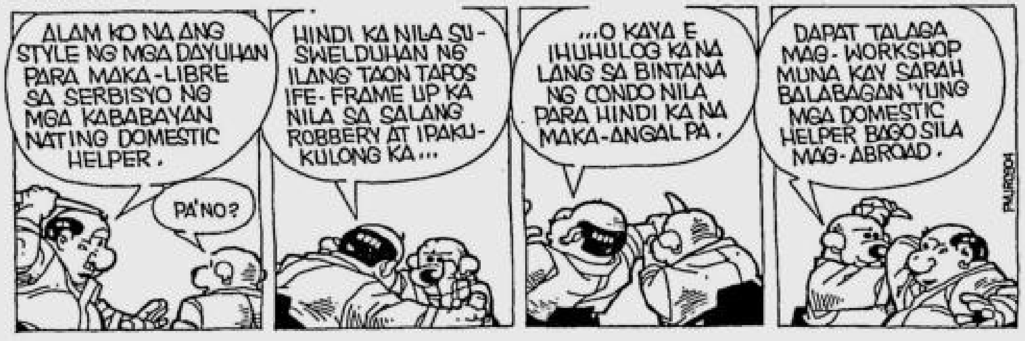
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


DO YOU THINK MY NEW TOUPEE LOOKS REALISTIC?
IT REALISTICALLY LOOKS LIKE A CAT SPIT UP A HAIRBALL ON YOUR HEAD
9-23

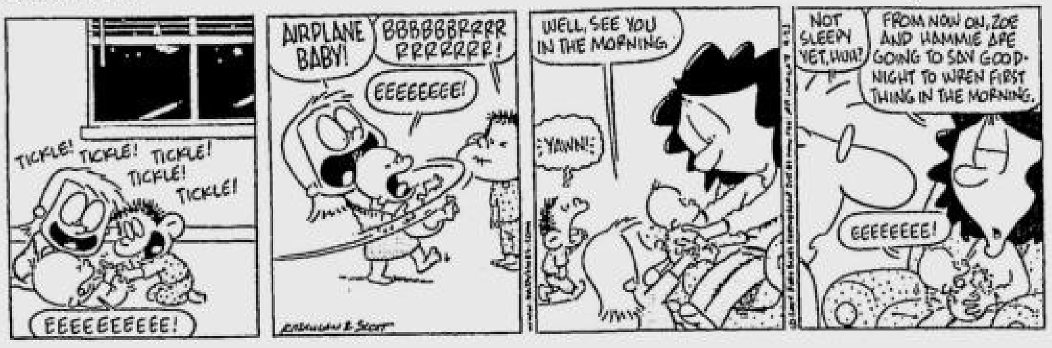
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ALAM KO NA ANG STYLE NG MGA DAYUHAN PARA MAKA-LIBRE SA SERBISYO NG MGA KABABAYAN NATING DOMESTIC HELPER.
PA'NO?
HINDI KA NILA SUSWELDUHAN NG ILANG TAON TAPOS IFE-FRAME UP KA NILA SA SALANG ROBBERY AT IPAKUKULONG KA...
...O KAYA E IHUHULOG KA NA LANG SA BINTANA NG CONDO NILA PARA HINDI KA NA MAKA-ANGAL PA.
DAPAT TALAGA MAG-WORKSHOP MUNA KAY SARAH BALABAGAN 'YUNG MGA DOMESTIC HELPER BAGO SILA MAG-ABROAD.

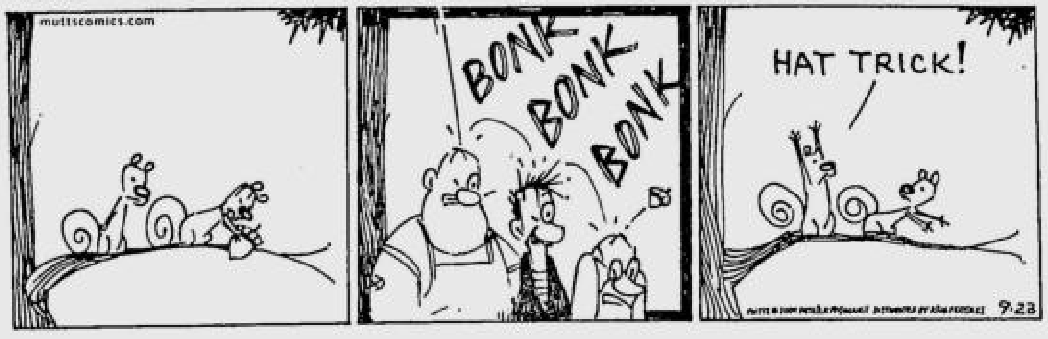
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


TICKLE! TICKLE! TICKLE! TICKLE! TICKLE!
EEEEEEEEEE!
AIRPLANE BABY!
BBBBBBRRRR RRRRRRR!
EEEEEEEE!
WELL, SEE YOU IN THE MORNING.
YAWN!
NOT SLEEPY YET, HUH?
FROM NOW ON, ZOE AND HAMMIE ARE GOING TO SAY GOOD-NIGHT TO WREN FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.
EEEEEEEE!

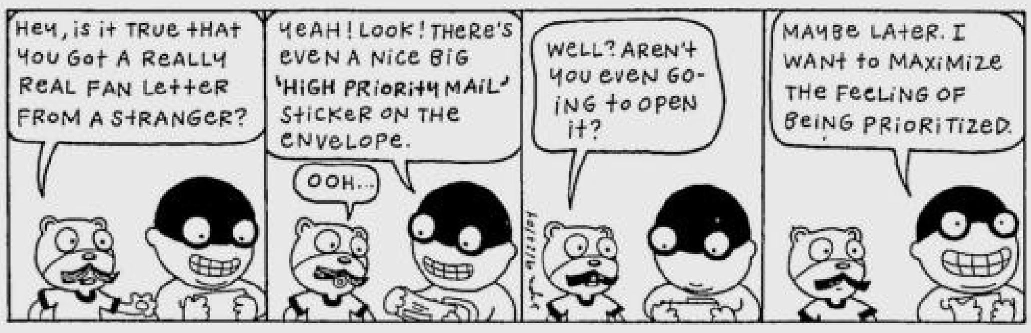
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


muttscomics.com
BONK
BONK
BONK
HAT TRICK!
9.23

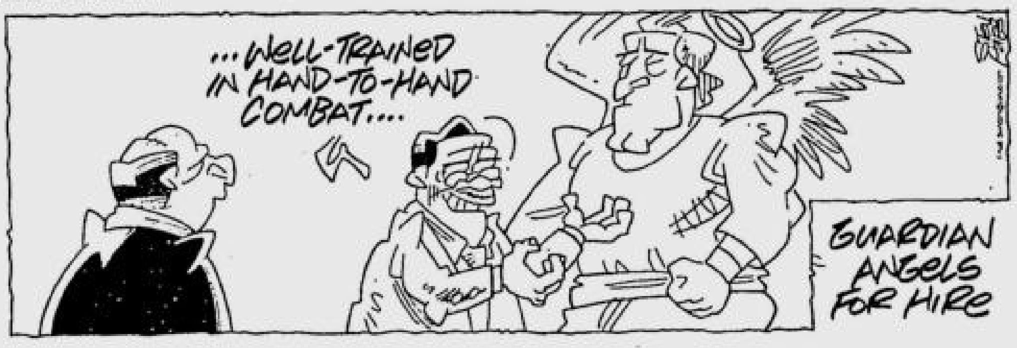
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, is it TRUE tHAt You Got A ReALLy ReAL FAN Letter FROM A StRANGeR?
yeAH! Look! THeRe'S eveN A Nice BiG 'HIGH PRioRity MAIL' Sticker ON THe eNveLope.
OOH...
WeLL? AReN't you even GOiNG to open it?
MAyBe LAter. I WANt to MAXiMize THe FeeLiNG OF BeiNG PRioRiTized.

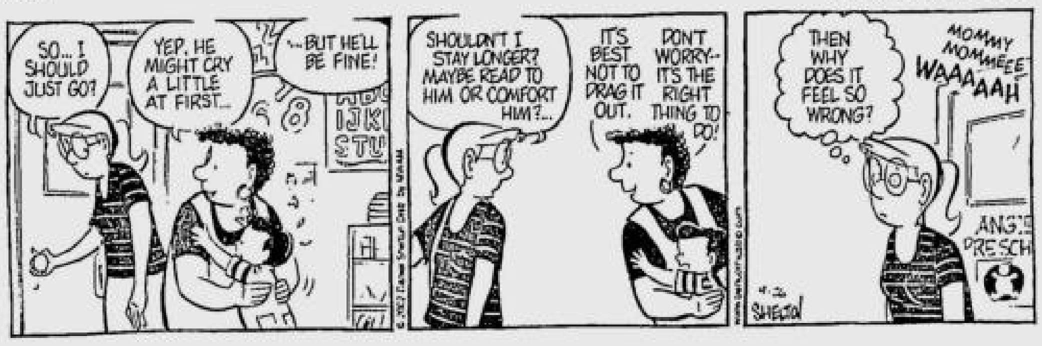
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


...WELL-TRAINED IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT....
GUARDIAN ANGELS FOR HIRE

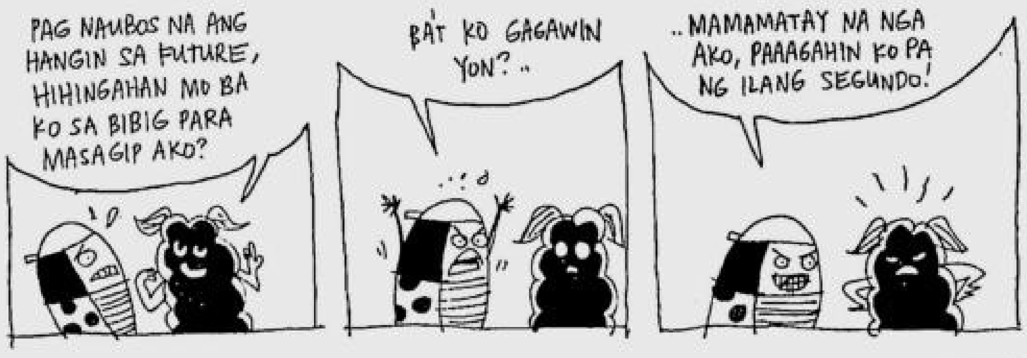
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SO... I SHOULD JUST GO?
YEP, HE MIGHT CRY A LITTLE AT FIRST...
...BUT HE'LL BE FINE!
SHOULDN'T I STAY LONGER? MAYBE READ TO HIM OR COMFORT HIM?...
IT'S BEST NOT TO DRAG IT OUT.
DON'T WORRY-- IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO!
THEN WHY DOES IT FEEL SO WRONG?
MOMMY MOMMEEE WAAAAAH
ANG'S PRESCH

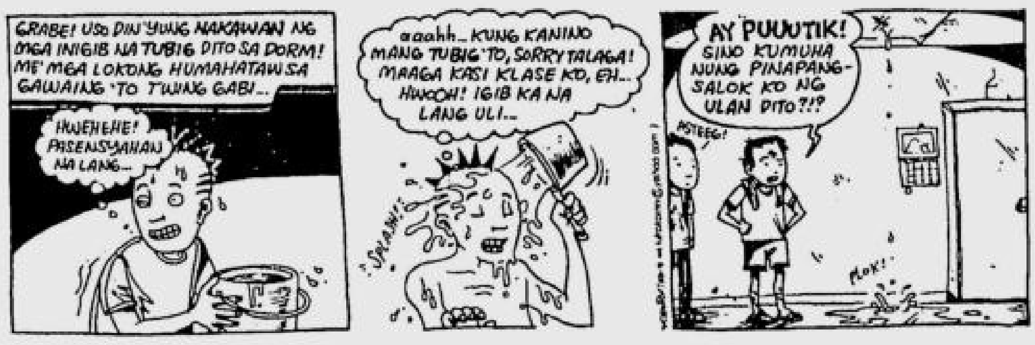
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PAG NAUBOS NA ANG HANGIN SA FUTURE, HIHINGAHAN MO BA KO SA BIBIG PARA MASAGIP AKO?
BAT KO GAGAWIN YON?..
..MAMAMATAY NA NGA AKO, PAAAGAHIN KO PA NG ILANG SEGUNDO!

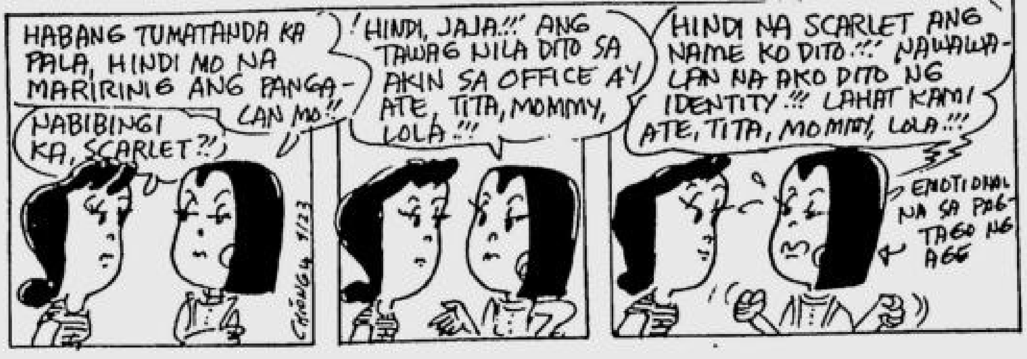
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE! USO DIN 'YUNG NAKAWAN NG MGA INIGIB NA TUBIG DITO SA DORM! ME' MGA LOKONG HUMAHATAW SA GAWAING 'TO TUWING GABI...
HWEHEHE! PASENSYAHAN NA LANG...
aaahh... KUNG KANINO MANG TUBIG 'TO, SORRY TALAGA! MAAGA KASI KLASE KO, EH... HWOOH! IGIB KA NA LANG ULI...
SPLASH!
AY PUUUTIK! SINO KUMUHA NUNG PINAPANG-SALOK KO NG ULAN DITO?!?
PSTEEG!
PLOK!

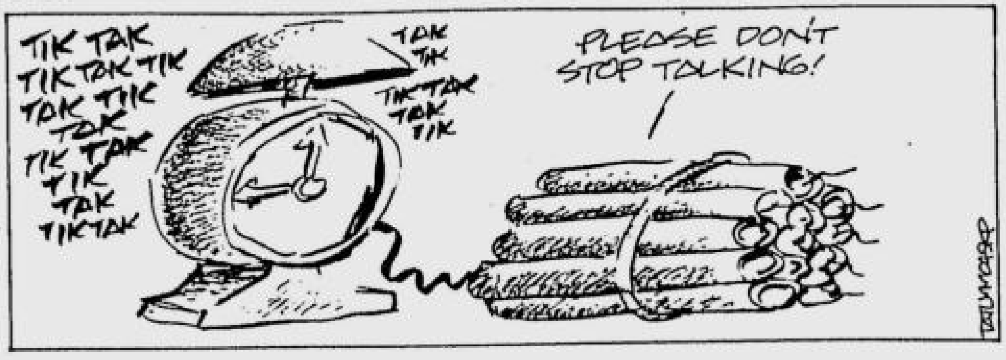
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HABANG TUMATANDA KA PALA, HINDI MO NA MARIRINIG ANG PANGALAN MO!!
NABIBINGI KA, SCARLET?!
HINDI, JAJA!!! ANG TAWAG NILA DITO SA AKIN SA OFFICE AY ATE, TITA, MOMMY, LOLA!!!
HINDI NA SCARLET ANG NAME KO DITO!!! NAWAWALAN NA AKO DITO NG IDENTITY!!! LAHAT KAMI ATE, TITA, MOMMY, LOLA!!!
EMOTIONAL NA SA PAGTAGO NG AGE

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK
TAK TAK TIK TAK TAK TIK
PLEASE DON'T STOP TALKING!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're highly creative and definitely adventurous. You're attracted to all aspects of life. You make things happen; in part, because others find you seductive and charming. You can make a big difference in the world. In the year ahead, focus on your closest friendships and partnerships.
Birthdate of: Mickey Rooney, actor; Bruce Springsteen, singer; Ray Charles, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): With the Sun opposite your sign now, you have a wonderful opportunity to learn more about yourself in the next four weeks. Stay tuned!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Now you have a strong urge to get better organized. Indulge this impulse by painting, cleaning, sorting things out and getting rid of whatever you don't need.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): During the next six weeks, you'll have increased opportunities to party, flirt, see theater and the movies, engage in professional sports and enjoy playful activities with children.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Now your attention turns to home, family and domestic matters. In the next few weeks, real estate also becomes a prime focus.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Fasten your seat belts! The tempo of your days will accelerate now. That's because short trips, errands and conversations with everyone keep you flying!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You'll definitely be working harder to spend money, and working harder to earn it in the month ahead. On a deep level, you're thinking about your basic values in life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Once again, the Sun is in your sign. It's your turn now to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. It's quite all right to put yourself first now. (Happy birthday!)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): In the next two weeks, set aside a little time to ponder how well you're doing at the art of living. Do you like your life? How do you want things to be different? What can you do to make this happen?

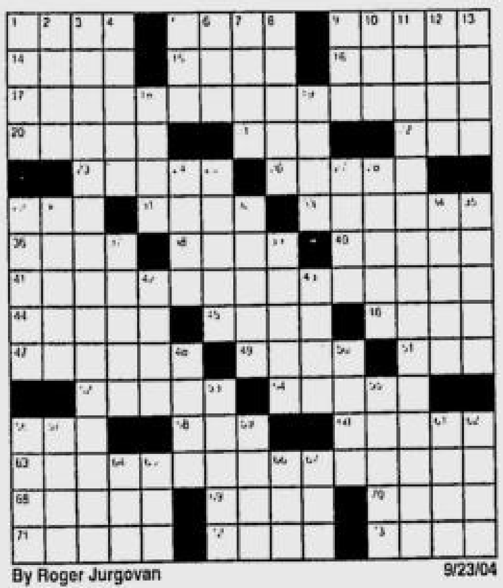
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Discussions with friends about your long-term goals and dreams for the future can be helpful to you now. Feedback from others might steer you in a new direction.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): No mater what you do for a living, you're in the spotlight for some reason in the next few weeks. People notice you! Your increased ambition can also make this happen.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Plans for travel, and an involvement with education, universities and colleges, as well as an increased focus on publishing, are all likely in the next five to six weeks.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Try to wade through some of the red tape connected with insurance matters, wills, inheritances, taxes and debt that you have. (You're also feeling very passionate in your private life.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Roger Jurgovan
Potomac, MD
9/23/04

ACROSS
1 Buck
5 Spike or brad
9 Frighten
14 Viking alphabet character
15 Scuttlebutt
16 Tippy vessel
17 Clowder
20 Pacific island group
21 Affirmative vote
22 Victrola mfr.
23 Marty of Jefferson Airplane
26 Play guitar
29 Cheer at the corrida
31 Weirdo
33 Instrumental composition
36 Sorvino of "Mighty Aphrodite"
38 Two-toed sloth
40 Passion
41 Shrewdness
44 Old-time music systems
45 Segment of a revue
46 Type of dancer
47 If you're lucky
49 From the top
51 Team follower
52 Radical
54 Ballplayer Nettles
56 Sense organ
58 Attorneys' org.
60 Fertile loam
63 Kindle
68 Sound like a frog
69 Conceited
70 SDI weapon
71 Undue speed
72 Sea eagles
73 Numidian serpent

DOWN
1 Toledo Mmes.
2 Brass band member
3 Drove
4 Salami type
5 U.S. medical center
6 Year in Madrid
7 Speculative
8 Runs easily
9 Behave
10 Varnish resin
11 Gaggle
12 Mil. course
13 Tableland
18 Horseshoe projection
19 Diner sign
24 Promissory notes
25 Childhood taboos
27 Wander
28 Remove bridles
29 Cornhusker city
30 Lawful
32 Author of "The Trial"
34 Pacific island country
35 Unlawful torching
37 Sharon of Israel
39 Exploiting
42 Subtle attention getter
43 Roman way
48 Snare
50 Dropo or Whitman
53 Over
55 Greek letters
56 Apiece
57 Taj Mahal location
59 Some distance
61 Break suddenly
62 Mach-2 breakers
64 Type of bran
65 Don Ho's strings
66 Family
67 Elected ones

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	V	E	R	■	E	T	A	L	■	A	L	A	S
A	D	E	L	E	■	A	I	D	A	■	M	A	N	E
K	A	R	A	T	■	G	N	A	W	■	E	R	I	N
I	M	S	T	I	L	L	T	R	Y	I	N	G	T	O
■	■	A	E	R	I	E	S	■	E	N	D	E	A	R
O	A	T	■	E	S	T	■	T	R	A	■	■	■	■
W	R	I	T	E	A	■	L	A	S	■	I	F	F	Y
N	I	L	E	S	■	L	I	T	■	H	A	R	E	E
S	L	E	D	■	F	E	Z	■	D	E	C	E	N	T
■	■	■	■	V	I	E	■	K	I	M	■	S	D	I
A	S	S	A	I	L	■	E	N	R	I	C	H	■	■
S	O	N	G	I	L	L	G	E	T	T	H	E	R	E
P	L	A	N	■	S	A	R	A	■	T	I	N	A	S
C	A	K	E	■	I	C	E	D	■	A	M	E	N	S
A	R	E	S	■	N	E	T	S	■	L	E	D	G	E

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9/23/04

Oktoberfest celebration

DINING OUT

MANDARIN Oriental Manila stages Oktoberfest on Oct. 1 and 2 at NBC Tent, Fort Bonifacio Global City. The event promises nights of free-flowing beer, buffet of German delicacies and beer-drinking and yodelling contests.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Patisserie celebrates the Mooncake Festival until Sept. 30. Call 5261212.

CHINESE Monk offers mooncakes with white lotus cream and salted eggyolk in the center with black beans and mixed nuts until Sept. 30. Get one box of four mooncakes and have a free appetizer on your next visit. Chinese Monk is at the 1/L, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati. Call 8973785/ 8969429.

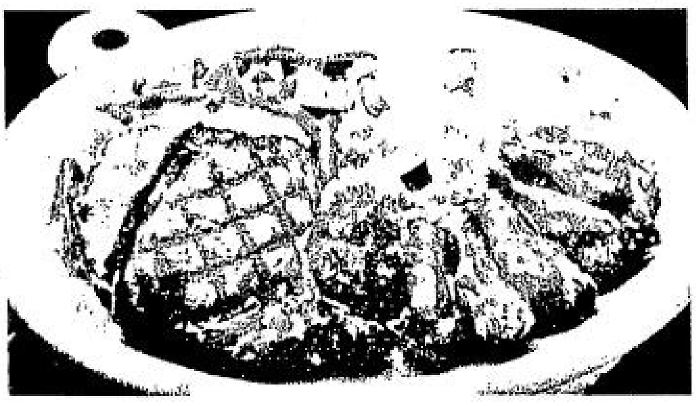
RASA Express, a quick-service outlet of Rasa The Best of Singapore at the Coliseum Circle in Araneta Center, opens at the Megastrip in SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. The outlet offers Hainanese Chicken, Laksa with Prawn, Singapore Chili Crab and Satay Prima Pork.

HOLIDAY Inn Galleria Manila's Raphael Café-Restaurant presents coffee concoctions like Iced Latte, Iced Americano, Iced Cappuccino and Cafe Mocha. Iced Latte and Frappe come in 10 flavors: Macadamia Nut, Almond Roca, Hazelnut, Amaretto, Irish Cream, Vanilla, Raspberry, Caramel, White and Dark Chocolate. Call 6337111.

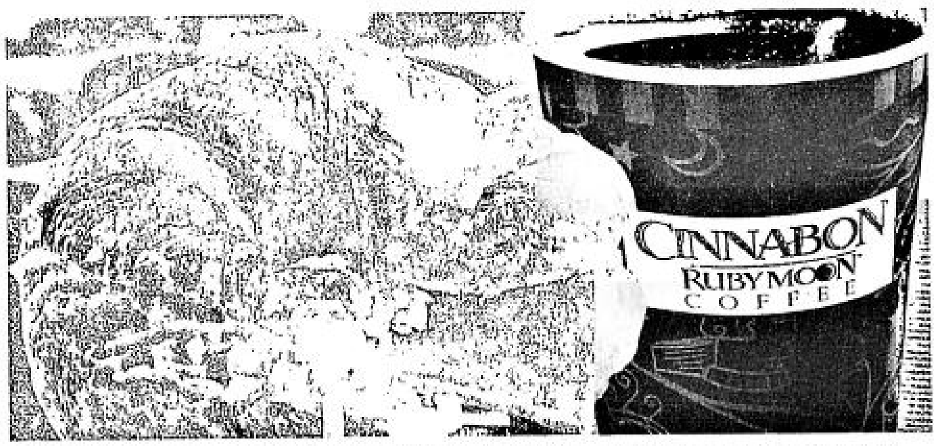
SUPER Bowl of China offers delectable dishes right into your home or office. Just dial Super Bowl's Super Delivery hotline, 7378888, for a minimum order of P250 plus a 10-percent delivery charge. Super Bowl of China branches are located at Megastrip of SM Megamall; Jupiter Street in Bel-Air, Makati City; Glorietta 4; Chefs Avenue in Festival Mall, Alabang; 2/L SM City North Edsa; Eastwood City Walk 2 in Libis; and at the G/L of SM Fairview.

FUEGO Hotels brings "Flavors of Spain 2," a Spanish food festival to be held at Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay (Oct. 16-31), Pearl Farm Beach Resort in Davao (Nov. 13-30) and Club Punta Fuego in Batangas (Nov. 19-30). Call 7501999, 7513088/89 or 7501896/98.

EDSA Shangri-La's Summer Palace features Seafood Specials until Sept. 30. These include Deep Fried Fish with sweet and sour sauce, Fried Clams and Rock Lobsters in tausi sauce, Prawn Balls with dried chili, Steamed Mussels with garlic, Seafood with Walnuts, Garoupa Fillet in Sesame Seeds, Cod Fish with Black Mushrooms, and Fish Fillet in XO Sauce. Call 6338888.



TGI FRIDAY'S offers Pacific Grilled Pork Chops as part of Friday's Three for All. TGI Friday's has branches at Robinsons Place, Glorietta 3, Hotel Rembrandt-QC, Sta. Lucia East and Alabang Town Center.



CINNABON launches Cinnabon Ham and Cheese Croissant. Enjoy them with regular Café Americano for P80 at the following outlets: Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; Robinsons Place Manila; Shell Travel Plaza-South Luzon; Shell South Luzon-Select; Shell Travel Plaza-North Luzon; Shell North Luzon-Select; SM Megamall; The Podium; San Miguel East Wing of Robinsons Galleria; and Greenhills Shopping Center.

MELANIE Productions presents

Retaso

A dinner fashion show featuring an eclectic mix of collections from the sensual to innovative by Manila's premiere designers and Philippine delegates to the prestigious fashion design competition in Paris like **Avel Bacudio, Alex Pigao James Reyes, Popoy Barba, & Pablo Mendez.** Designers par excellance **Bong Lazo, Loyola Ignacio Armhand Remojo, Frederick Alba, & Gener Gozum** will also present their collections. **Retaso fashion gala** will be held on **September 25, 2004; 7 p.m.** at the **Centennial Ballroom** of the **Manila Hotel,** for the benefit of **CHILDHOPE FOUNDATION** on behalf of the Street Children and the Prayer Convent of Saint Anthony de Padua in Tagaytay City.

Presented by

INQUIRER · Young Hearts, Inc. · DRAGON Internationale · Serenity · 103.5
- Mirror Magazine
- dzRB AM 'Radyo ng Bayan Punto Perfecto'

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producer: MS. LANIE DIAZ-ALVAREZ • directed by TOM L. PO

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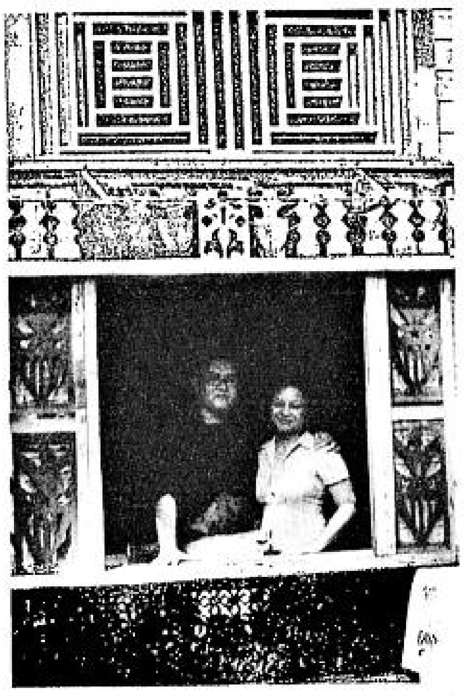
Salud to good . . .

From page E1



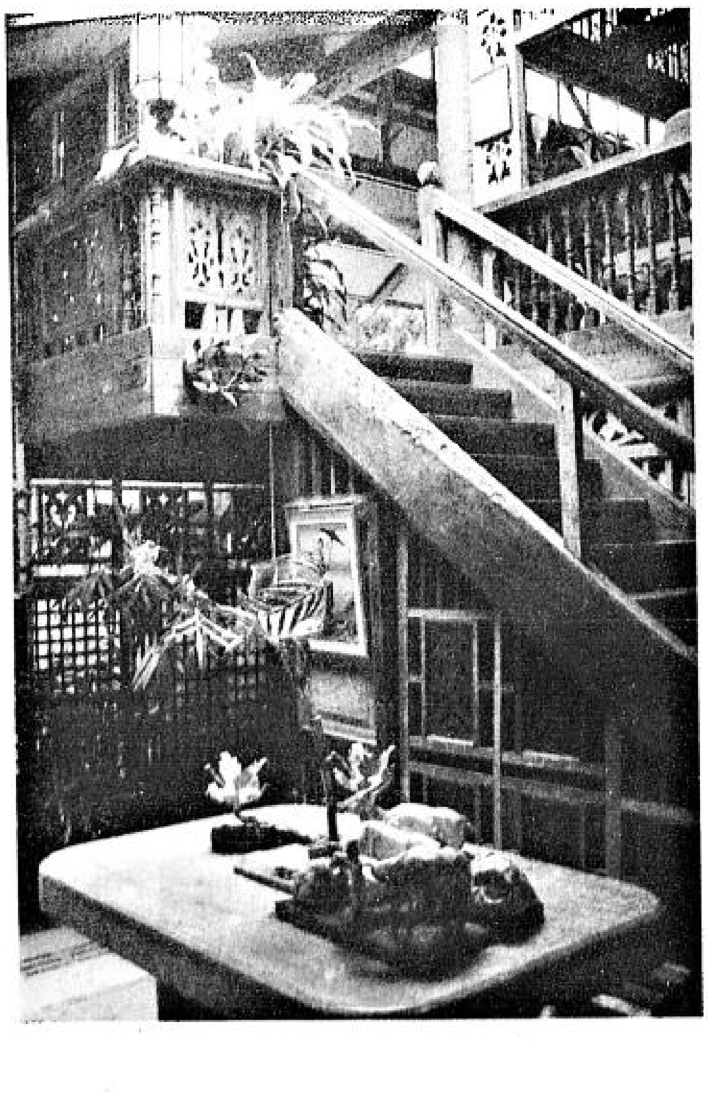
Patis Tesoro, know what we mean. It was Patis and husband Tito who encouraged the two to expand their operations beyond Baguio. Patis even had a separate kitchen and staff house built within the property. Workers are also finishing a parking area somewhere in front.

That would mean, however, opening the family's weekend home to strangers. Like Bistro Salud in Baguio, says Nina, Kusina Salud "evolved from a space in one of my family's homes." Since people have been trooping to the place regularly for quite some time now, it's simply a matter of, well, charging them.

"It will also be a venue for the arts," she adds. "Most of the featured artists, this time, will be my mom's friends."

For starters, Kusina Salud will be featuring the artworks of Carlitos Ortega and former Dutch ambassador Theo Arnold. Nina, the resident events organizers, already has several parties lined up.

To make the trip more worthwhile, Nina and several restaurant and resort owners plan to hook up and promote the destination to tourists.

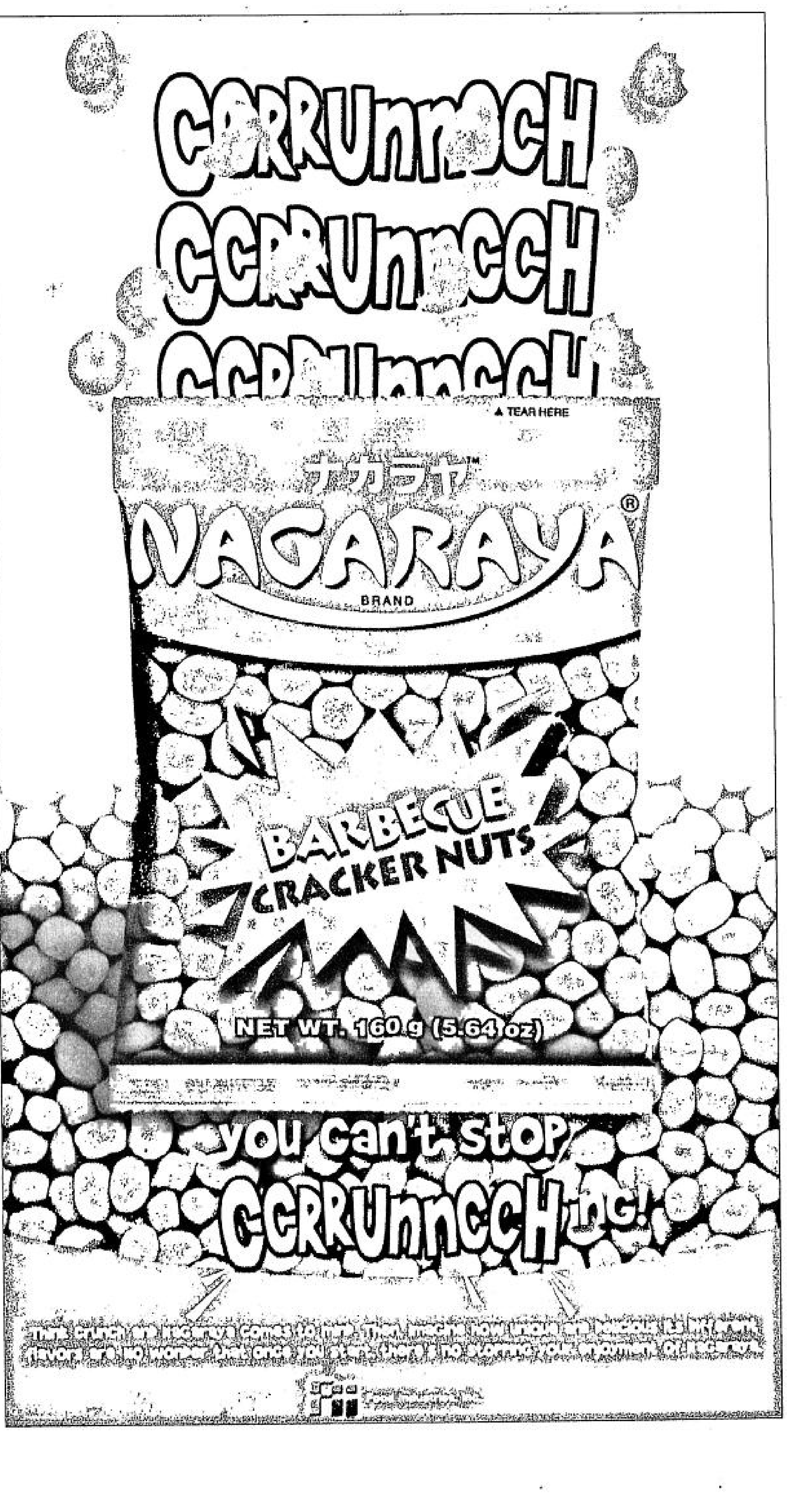


For starters, they're coming out with a map pinpointing their establishments and various places of interests. And the best part is, unlike, say, going to Baguio, you don't have to travel for six hours to savor the sights, sounds and flavors Laguna and parts of Quezon.

Call Kusina Salud in: Manila, (02)7265057 and (02)7246203; San Pablo, (049)2466878 and (049)2466877; 0921-7726985. E-mail kusinasalud@yahoo.com.

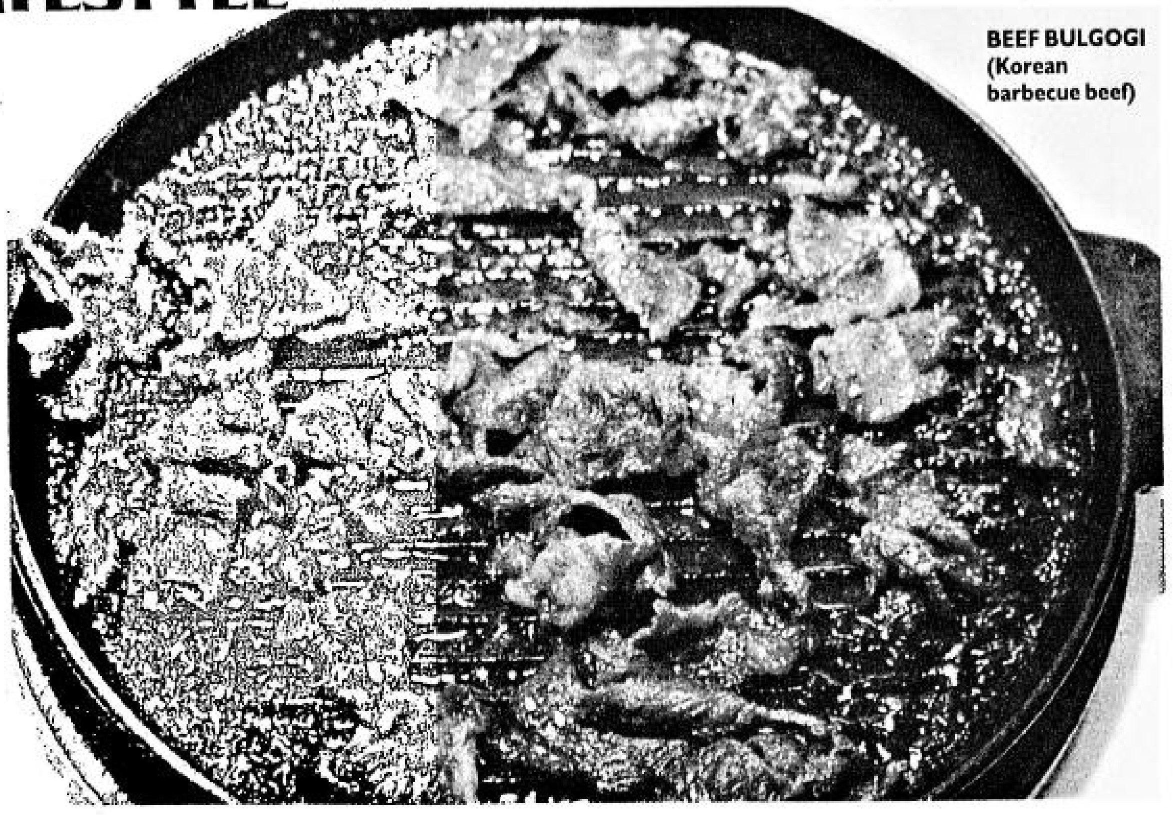
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

(top photo) HUSBAND-AND-WIFE team Paul and Nina Poblador feels at home; (left) a space for art will feature local artists from Laguna and Quezon.



At Sorabol Korean BBQ, diners can seek out new adventures in Korean flavor

CHAPCHAE (Korean Glass Noodles in sesame oil and soy sauce)



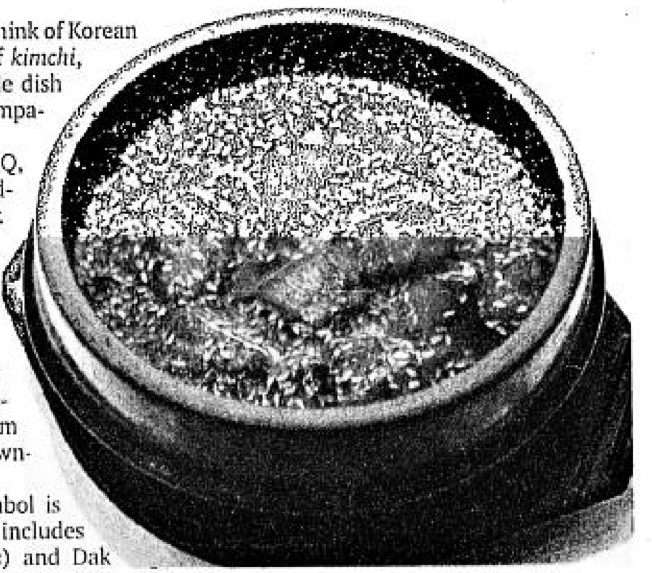
BEEF BULGOGI (Korean barbecue beef)

Delectable dragon food

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Carpio

WHEN most people think of Korean food, they think of *kimchi*, Korea's famous side dish which, along with rice, accompanies almost every meal.

But at Sorabol Korean BBQ, diners can seek out new adventures in Korean flavor. "Consumers are becoming more adventurous and demanding when it comes to the food they choose to eat when dining out. So Sorabol is responding to the trend by offering a wide variety of Korean dishes," says Lorraine Lim Aguila, Sorabol franchise owner.



KALBI Chim (Beef ribs stew)

The main feature of Sorabol is Korean barbecue, which includes Kalbi (barbecued short ribs) and Dak Guyee (barbecued chicken). There are also noodles with egg or spinach, appetizers like dumplings, scallion pancakes and rice rolls, salads, rice bowls served with *chapchae* noodles and rice and vegetarian meals.

The highly nutritious Korean food is low in calories, being made chiefly of a wide variety of vegetables. Seasonings include garlic, red pepper, scallions, soy sauce, fermented bean paste, ginger and sesame oil.

An example is Beef Bulgogi, a Korean-style beef and vegetable dish in traditional garlic sesame barbecue sauce with straw mushrooms, peppers and onions. "Beef Bulgogi represents a treat for the growing number of diners who shun the ordinary," Aguila says.

Prosperous business

Sorabol, named after the prosperous capital of the Shilla Dynasty, first opened in 1979 at the San Francisco Bay Area. The restaurant's logo is a dragon, which was said to protect that ancient city. The resto's founder, Young-Ran Hong, believes this symbol is lucky for the business.

After winning numerous awards and receiving good reviews from the Bay Area's famously hard-to-please food critics, Sorabol quickly acquired a long list of Korean food enthusiasts.

Sorabol now has 15 outlets in California. In the Philippines, Sorabol Korean BBQ is located at 2/L, Tastebuds, Robinsons Place, Ermita, Manila (tel. 5210211); Food Choices, Greenbelt 3, Makati (7574006); UG/L, SM Southmall (8004729); and Center Car Park, Greenhills Shopping Center (7271547).

The design of Sorabol in California is similar to a food court, says Aguila, who used to dine with her sister Lora in one of its branches.

"The food is so delicious we decided to bring it home to the Philippines. We're the first to open a franchise in Asia. And the owners are so happy because they have received invitations to open in Singapore and Malaysia. The owner even wants the Singaporean franchisee to train with us;" Aguila says.

The same menu is served in the franchises, Aguila says, but adapted to the Filipino palate. The spices, oil and noodles used in the restaurants are imported from Korea. "But we don't make the dishes too spicy because Filipinos are not too fond of spicy food," she says.

Sorabol's Filipino cooks were trained by the Korean chef of the San Francisco outlets. He visits the franchises once a year to check on the quality of food.

"Korean food is akin to Chinese and Japanese cuisines based on our research. It's not too salty nor too oily and not too spicy. But many diners say the food is flavorful. And I can say we're the only contemporary Korean restaurant that has a bright and fun design. It's very mainstream," Aguila says.

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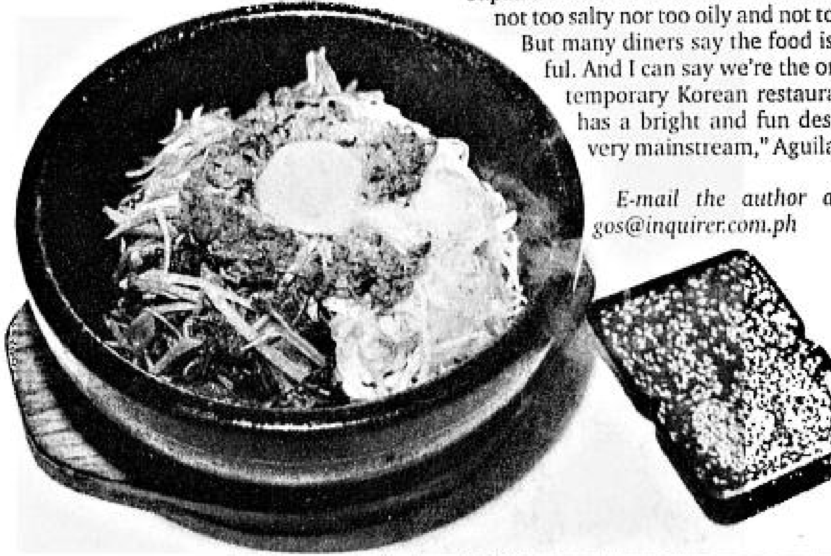
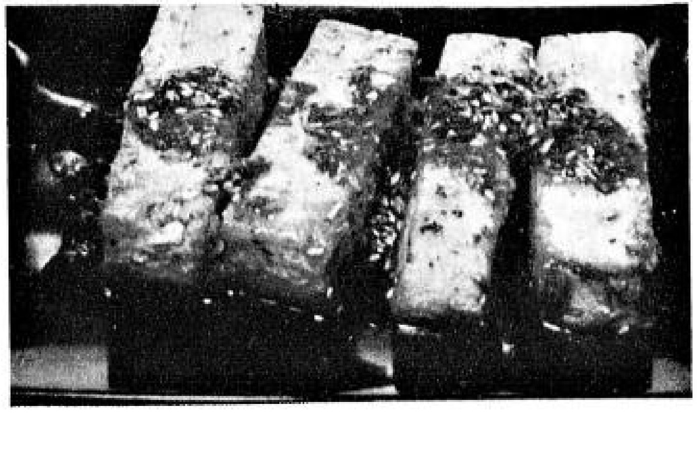
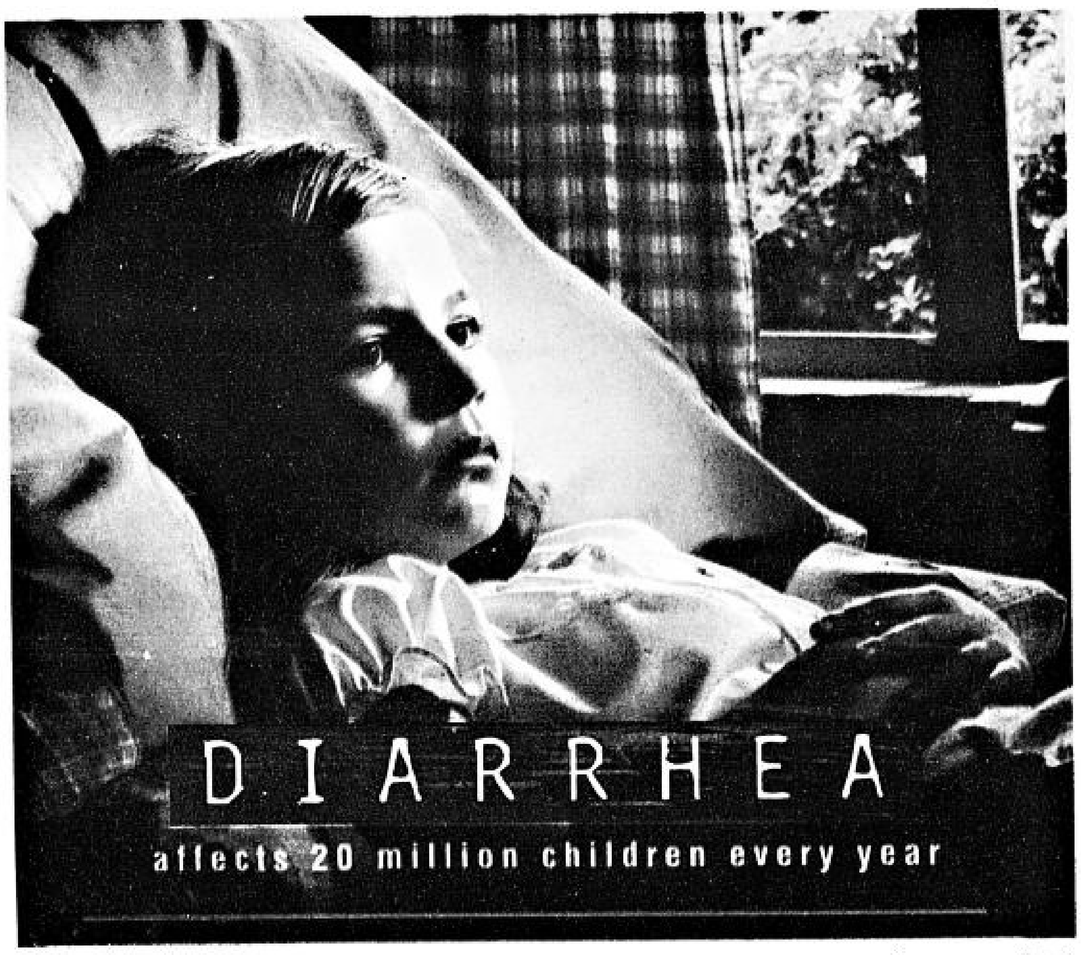
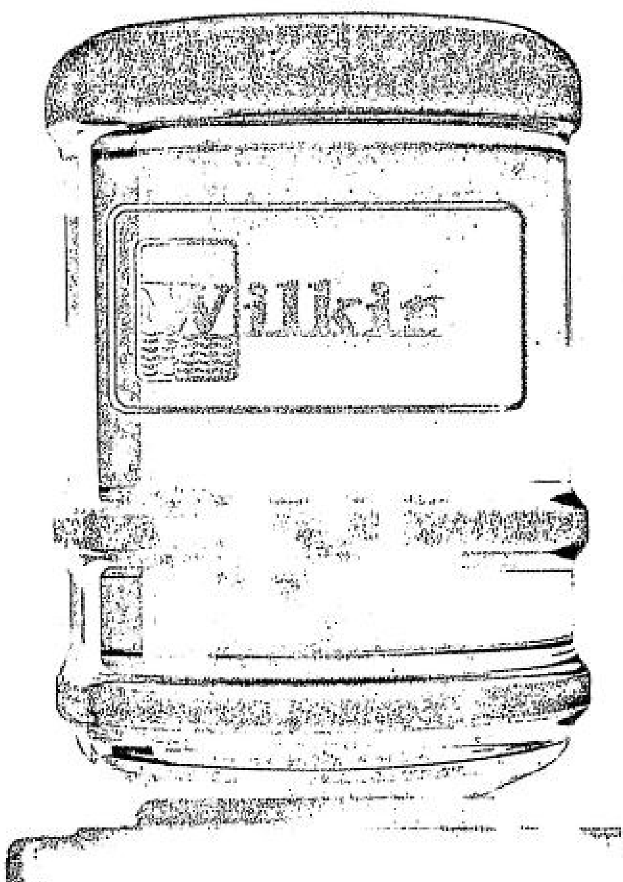


BIBIM BAP (Vegetable rice topped with fried egg, served with chili sauce)



DOOBOO CHIM (Spicy bean curd sauteed in spicy Korean sauce)


DIARRHEA
affects 20 million children every year



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* World Health Organization "Water and Sanitation" Facts and Figures (as of August 28, 2002)

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